NINTENDO POWER®

The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword • Nintendo 3DS • Donkey Kong Country Returns • GoldenEye 007 • Golden Sun: Dark Dawn • Kirby's Epic Yarn

258

SEPTEMBER 2010

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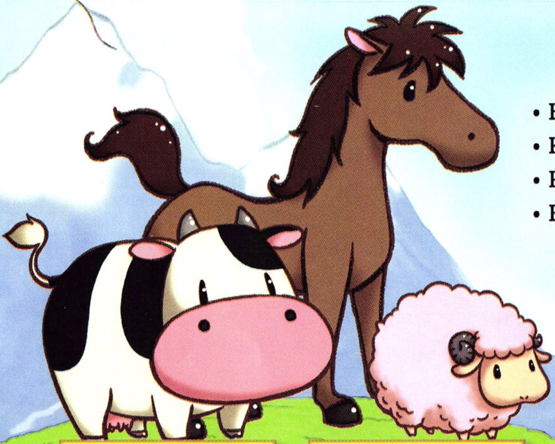

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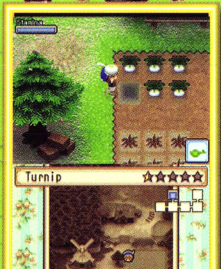

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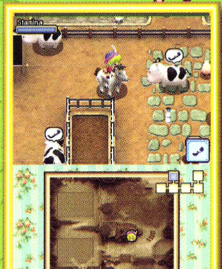
Turnip ★★★★★



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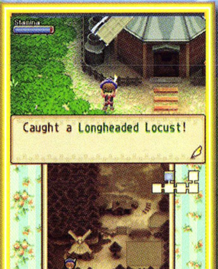

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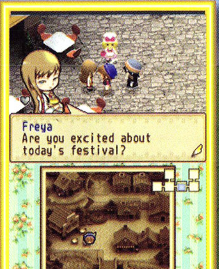
Caught a Longheaded Locust!



Spring 30 (Mon)
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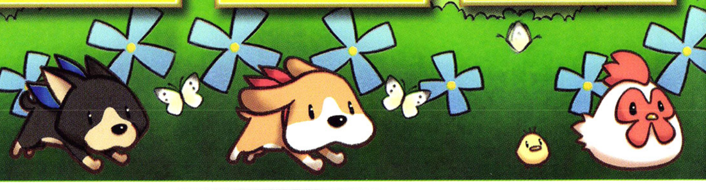
Freya
Are you excited about today's festival?



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MONSTER TALE 64

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3DS = NINTENDO 3DS
DS = NINTENDO DS
DW = DSiWARE
NES = NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM
VC = VIRTUAL CONSOLE
Wii = Wii
WW = WiiWARE

POWER UP 🟥
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3D
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nintendogs + cats
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B
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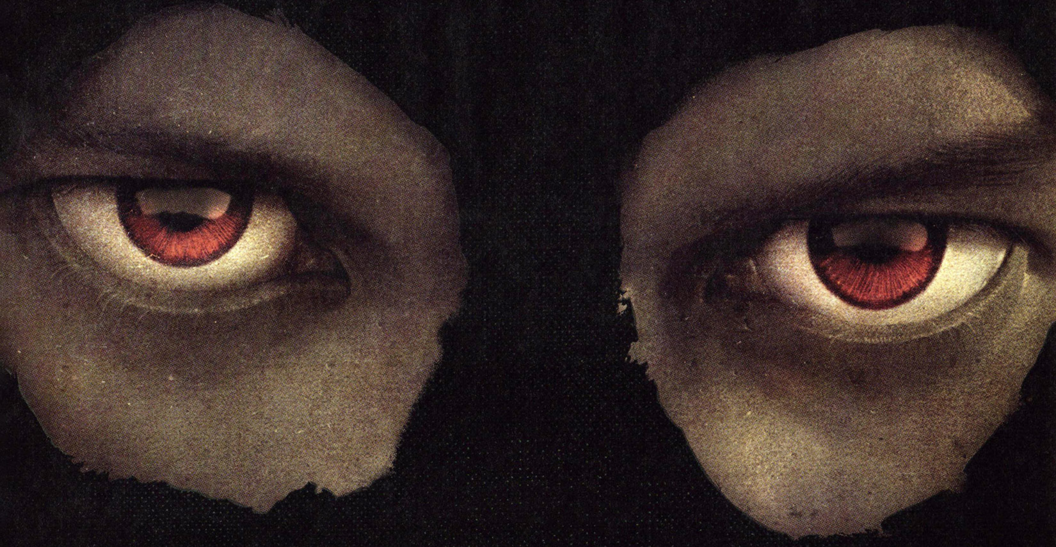
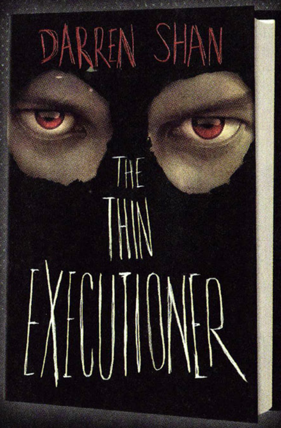
HOME
START
POWER

NINTENDO 3DS 10

The executioner swung his axe
–*THWACK!*–
and another head went rolling into the dust.





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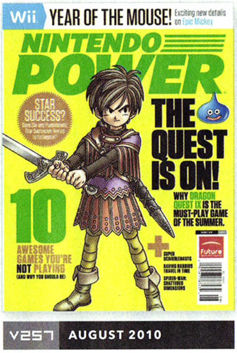
Pulse

That's How You Do It

Chris Slate

It feels good, doesn't it? That special kind of electricity that's in the air when you're looking forward to the release of a great game. It puts a spring in your step and makes the gaming world seem that much more exciting. And after Nintendo's barrage of jaw-dropping announcements at E3, we now have dozens of top-notch titles to anticipate. That's the real magic of E3; to reenergize players and reconfirm that there's no better hobby in the world than video gaming. Nintendo has a history of thrilling its fans with big E3 game debuts, but the company's past presentations have been knocked for what some core players perceive as pandering too much to the casual crowd. But even the pickiest players would have a hard time finding much that's missing from this year's historic showing. And with one great event, Nintendo has made the gaming world a very exciting place to be.

CHRIS SLATE **EDITOR IN CHIEF**


Wii
YEAR OF THE MOUSE! Exciting new details on Epic Mickey
NINTENDO POWER
STAR SUCCESS?
THE QUEST IS ON!
WHY DRAGON QUEST IX IS THE MUST-PLAY GAME OF THE SUMMER.
10 AWESOME GAMES YOU'RE NOT PLAYING (AND WHY YOU SHOULD BE)
Future
V257 AUGUST 2010

Chris Slate here, back once again to answer your letters while Diddy Kong sits on my shoulders, shooting peanuts at passersby. But first, this month's special letter request: describe your very first encounter with an NES. Send your responses to the address on page 8, and we'll print the best ones!

LETTERS

Note: Those who failed to sign their letter shall be branded with the miserable moniker of one gaming's very worst characters.

Calling for Rain

The other day at school, my friend and I were whistling the *Song of Storms*. About three minutes later, a large cloud system rolled in. Later we decided to whistle the tune again and a break in the clouds appeared. We live in Washington so the weather's always bipolar, but c'mon, is that not awesome?! —**TREECKOFAN55**

If any bullies come up to the two of you while you're walking around the school, duo-whistling, please don't tell them you're summoning storms.

Mario vs. Mario

After fully finishing both Super Mario Galaxy games, I find that there are many things to compare and contrast about them. The observatory in the first Galaxy is bigger and there's more stuff to do, but you can't ride Yoshi or switch to Luigi whenever you want. And while the final fight with Bowser is pretty easy in the first game, Bowser is a little tougher in the second. If I had to choose, I would say that Super Mario Galaxy 2 is the better game. Do you guys have a favorite? —**#1 MARIO FAN**

I agonized over this very question while writing my Super Mario Galaxy 2 review. I would say that, while the freshness of the first game's concept made more of an impact on me, the extra features and refinements of the sequel make it the better-playing game.

Wii
SUPER MARIO GALAXY
VS
Wii
SUPER MARIO GALAXY 2

Just trying to choose between them brings on headaches and nausea!

I'm proud to say that, of all the games featured in your "Why Aren't You Playing This?" article, the only one I don't own is Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: The Crystal Bearers. I agree that all of the games listed are amazing and deserve to be played by every (age-appropriate) Wii owner. I just wanted you to know that not all of your cries are falling on deaf ears. —**SLAYER**

WHY AREN'T YOU PLAYING THIS?

Ten awesome Wii games you're probably not playing—but should be!

Muramasa: The Demon Blade

Imagining the Possibilities

I'm really excited about Nintendo 3DS, and I really hope that Nintendo makes a 3D version of Flipnote Studio. Think about how cool it would be when, upon adding a new layer to your animation, the layer underneath is sent into the background! —**TWINFIRES**

I just read that the Nintendo 3DS has a gyro sensor. Maybe there can be a sequel for Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble! —**HIRO N.**

WarioWare on the Nintendo 3DS would be the ultimate WarioWare! You would be able to tilt and shake the system, and use its cameras, touch screen, buttons, and the new Slide Pad, all in awesome 3D! —**THE ULTIMATE MARIO FAN**

Botched Bots

I was extremely disappointed to open up your "Why Aren't You Playing This?" feature to find that Excitebots: Trick Racing was nowhere to be seen! This game deserves to have far more people playing it than it currently has. (I need somebody to play with on Wi-Fi at two in the morning, darn it!) —**SOME KIND OF AL**

Gah, you're right! That was a pretty obvious one to include. How'd we miss it? Allow me to atone for our mistake right now: people of Earth, *go buy Excitebots*. It really is one of the best arcade racers we've played in years, and is the best racing game ever created that includes making sandwiches.

Team Players

Single-player games aren't just for one person. While most multiplayer games are competitive, single-player games can make a duo work as a team. For instance, my mom sucks at the fighting in Zelda, but she's great at the puzzles, while I'm just the opposite. So, together, we make a pretty good team! Sometimes the best multiplayer fun can be found in single-player games. —**RAGDOG**

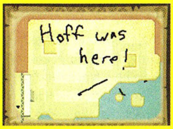
Good point! Some of the most fun that I've ever had was spent playing through single-player games with friends, taking turns with titles such as Prince of Persia and Metroid Prime. It's more fun to share an amazing gaming experience with someone else, don't you think?

Hey, you! Go buy Excitebots! Al's waiting for you online!

DON'T HASSLE THE HOFF

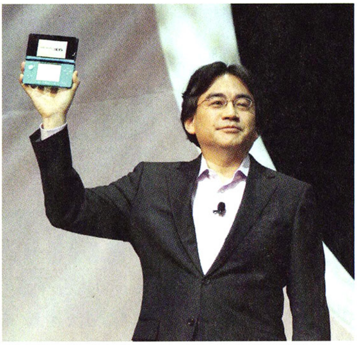
I have included my copy of The Legend of Zelda: Spirit Tracks with this letter. Please get me past the song for Sand Sanctuary with Rael. I believe that if anyone can do it, it is you, future Captain N. —**BRYDEN M.**

The Hoff says: OK, seriously: don't ever send us a game card, especially one that you want to get back. The mail is unpredictable and there's a zillion reasons why it might get lost for good. Besides, if we help everybody through the tough parts in games, it'd really cut into our time reserved for weighty philosophical debates about the Mushroom Kingdom legislative system. That said, we made a one-time exception for you, but now you'll have to live forever with this shame:



I just can't stop thinking about E3, mostly due to one reason: Nintendo 3DS! This system already has one of the greatest game lineups ever, with Animal Crossing, Kid Icarus, Sonic, Kingdom Hearts, Star Fox 64, and the Ocarina of Time remake. This was the greatest E3 *ever*!

—BUBSY



What do you think of Nintendo's E3 announcements?

I'm excited about all of the games that Nintendo showed at E3, especially Kirby's Epic Yarn. I didn't see it coming, and I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the trailer. Kirby looks so cute! I love his cute voice, too. I wonder how King Dedede and Meta Knight might look in yarn form.... **—IHASRHYTHM**

I am so glad that my favorite character, Pit, is *finally* getting a new game! I was literally jumping up and down and screaming with excitement! Nintendo, thank you *so* much for listening to we Kid Icarus fans! **—EMILY L.**

E3 was spectacular this year. I love how Nintendo is returning to hardcore gamers' interests.
—LEMONADE JOHNSON

The biggest surprise of E3 for me was the revival of GoldenEye 007. I remember the time I first played the N64 version in my cousin's basement.... Maybe I can finally get the edge on him 13 years later.
—DAN THE MAN

The coolest thing revealed at E3 this year is PilotWings Resort for the 3DS. The reason I think that is because, in your July 2009 issue, you wrote—alongside a picture of Wii Sports Resort Skydiving—"Aim for the rings like in Pilotwings for the Super NES!" I believe that Nintendo saw that article! **—PEACH**

All of my friends have been trying to get me to buy systems other than Nintendo's, and I almost did. Then I saw how awesome the next year is gonna be for Nintendo and I thought to myself, "What am I thinking?! Nintendo owns!"**—SLIPPY TOAD**

The graphic capabilities of the 3DS are amazing! When I first saw the trailer for Kid Icarus: Uprising, I seriously thought it was a Wii game. **—JACO**

I'm very happy about the 3DS, and more importantly, its new Metal Gear and Resident Evil games. I love seeing franchises that are popular on other systems come back to Nintendo. Woot!
—ROCKY RODENT

The 3DS looks awesome! I can't wait to play the new Kid Icarus and Ocarina of Time games on it! I hope to see lots more N64 titles come to the system. Can you say "portable Super Smash Bros.?"
—WONDER DOG

I can't believe that they announced a Mario Kart Game for the 3DS! I hope Fawful and Midbus appear in it! **—CHUCK ROCK**

I practically drooled over the trailer for The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword! Whenever a new Zelda game is announced, it's the only thing I can think about. I had to replay Twilight Princess just to try and get my mind off of it, but I'm still thinking about breaking into Nintendo and stealing a copy of Skyward Sword while nobody's looking. **—MEGAN**

The E3 announcements reaffirmed why I continue to be a Nintendo fan. However, I was disappointed that there was no Pikmin 3!
—NINTENDO FAN 2000000

My Wii just broke and I was debating about whether or not to get a new one, but after seeing the unveiling of the 3DS at Nintendo's best E3 showing of all time, I may not only get another Wii, but a 3DS, as well. **—CHRISTOPHER S.**

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Don't send links to game coverage on the Web—trust us; we see it all.

Don't ask about the status of upcoming games, or whether certain games will be announced; if we have that info, we'll always tell you.

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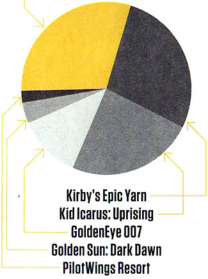
What Nintendo fans think, want, and do

The SCORE

WEIGH IN ON NEXT MONTH'S TOPICS AT WWW.NINTENDOPOWER.COM/POLLS.

Which revival are you most excited for?

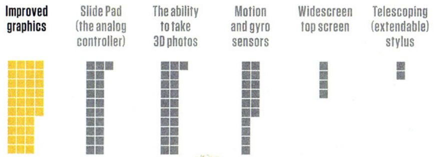
DONKEY KONG COUNTRY RETURNS

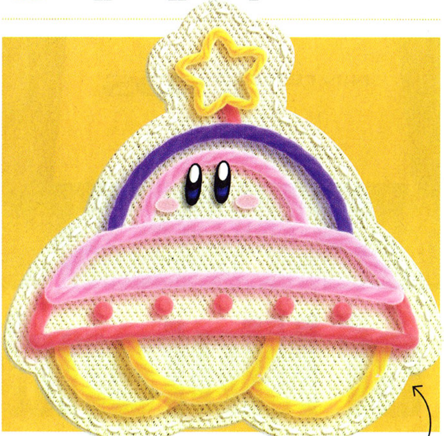


4 PERCENT of you dislike Kirby's new "yarn" look. Everyone else is all smiles.

80% of you think Nintendo had its best E3 ever

BESIDES 3D, WHICH NINTENDO 3DS FEATURE IS MOST EXCITING?





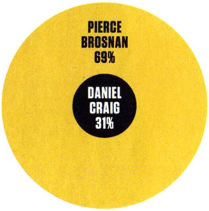
I WANT: THE ABILITY TO SHAPESHIFT LIKE

KIRBY 34%

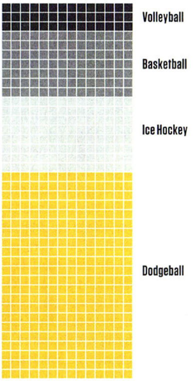
I want Pit's five-minute flight 23%
I want Link's Skyward Sword 33%
I want Diddy Kong as a buddy 10%

9 OUT OF 10 OF YOU LOVE THE COLORFUL NEW LOOK OF THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: SKYWARD SWORD

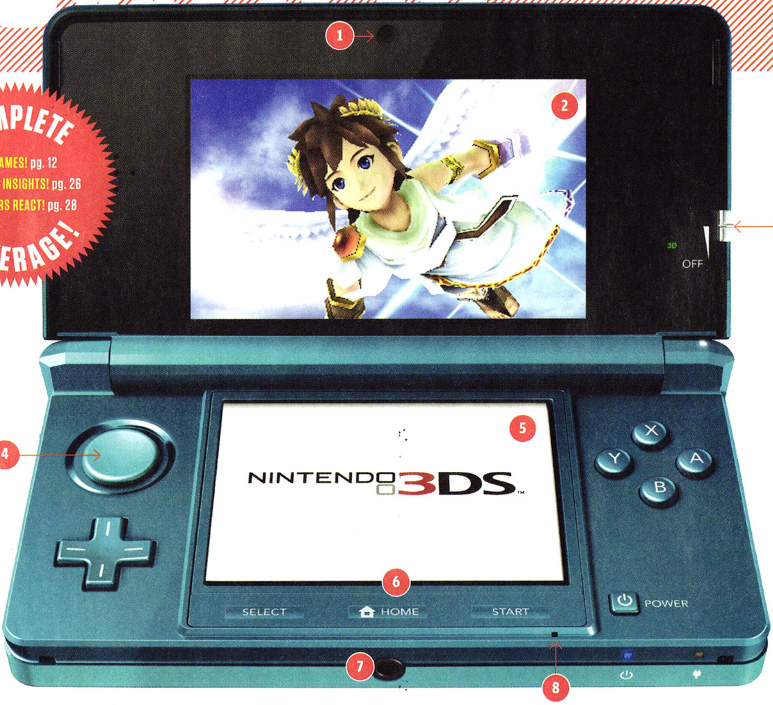
WHICH GOLDENEYE 007 BOND DO YOU PREFER?



Which Mario Sports Mix event most interests you?



COMPLETE
THE GAMES! pg. 12
HARDWARE INSIGHTS! pg. 26
DEVELOPERS REACT! pg. 28
COVERAGE!



Dawn of Nintendo 3DS

Nintendo reveals the future of portable gaming—and it looks unbelievable.

WE'D HAD HIGH HOPES for the Nintendo 3DS handheld ever since Nintendo announced the new system a few months ago, but we also had many questions. How would the 3D effect work without special glasses? What would the graphics be like? What else would it be able to do? Nintendo answered all those questions and a lot more when it unveiled the system to the public at this year's E3.

The Nintendo 3DS is, in a word, astonishing. It's impossible to re-create the amazing stereoscopic 3D visuals in print, but trust us—it feels like you're looking into the screen and seeing actual depth; it has to be experienced to be truly appreciated. And in addition to being in glasses-free 3D, the graphics are simply gorgeous. The visuals are a significant improvement over what's possible on the Nintendo DS system; it's no exaggeration to call them the best ever seen on a handheld gaming device.

Furthermore, the Nintendo 3DS system adds new functionality via an analog Slide Pad, two external cameras for taking 3D photographs (among other possible uses), a motion sensor, and a gyroscopic sensor—and that's in addition to many features we're already enjoying on the DS, such as a microphone and dual screens, the lower of which is a touch screen. (Note that the stereoscopic 3D is incorporated into only the top screen.) Nintendo touted the system's wireless functionality and noted that users will be able to passively exchange data even if they aren't playing the same game; the system will also download new content automatically while it's in sleep mode.

And then, of course, there are the games. Nintendo not only announced installments of many of its most popular franchises (including The Legend of Zelda, Star Fox, Mario Kart, Nintendogs, and—at last!—Kid Icarus), but also revealed that nearly every third-party publisher has pledged impressive support, with franchises such as Metal Gear Solid, Kingdom Hearts, Resident Evil, Street Fighter, Assassin's Creed, and The Sims slated for the new system.

On the following pages you'll get more insight into this groundbreaking hardware, along with comments from many of the gaming industry's top developers, plus looks at every game that's been shown for the system thus far. Get ready to be astonished. **—CHRIS H.**

Nintendo 3DS Details

Note that the system design depicted here is not final.

1. INTERNAL CAMERA
Say "cheese!" Like the Nintendo DSi, the Nintendo 3DS features a single interior camera.

2. TOP SCREEN
This 3.53-inch, 800x240-pixel-resolution LCD screen is what makes the magic happen. Half of the screen's pixels are allocated to each of your eyes, allowing it to display images that appear in stunning stereoscopic 3D. It's like watching a theatrical 3D movie, but without the need for special glasses.

3. 3D DEPTH SLIDER
How strong do you want the 3D effect to be? It's completely up to you with this slider.

4. SLIDE PAD
This analog input device makes movement feel incredibly smooth and natural. It should enable players to explore handheld polygonal worlds like never before.

5. BOTTOM SCREEN
Though it lacks stereoscopic 3D capabilities, the 3.02-inch, 320x240-pixel-resolution screen on the system's lower half does have all-important touch-screen functionality.

6. HOME BUTTON
The Home button lets you easily manage the functions of the Nintendo 3DS system.

7. STEREO HEADPHONE JACK
Compatible with standard headphones.

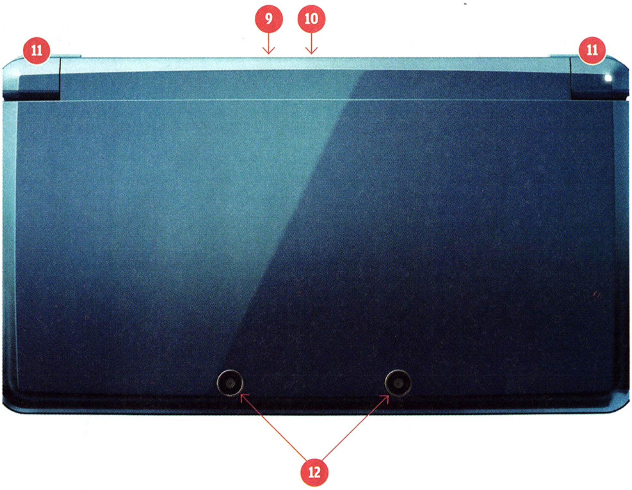
8. MICROPHONE
The microphone is so inconspicuous it's nearly invisible, but it's there.

9. STYLUS
Though you can't see it here, the system has a slot for a telescoping stylus that expands to four inches.

10. CARTRIDGE SLOT
The system plays all-new Nintendo 3DS game cards, plus it's backward-compatible with the existing DS library.

11. L AND R BUTTONS
What would a modern gaming device be without shoulder buttons?

12. TWO EXTERNAL CAMERAS
The inclusion of not one but two external cameras allows you to take pictures that can be viewed in 3D.



IT'S IN THE CARDS Game cards for the Nintendo 3DS are very similar to standard DS cards, but they have an additional notch on the side. The Nintendo 3DS game card boxes are also similar in size to those for DS games.

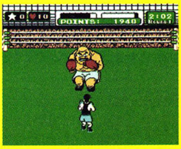
Unlimited Potential

Alongside dozens of new games and tech demos, Nintendo showed two very cool potential uses of the Nintendo 3DS: 3D movie trailers and 3D-enchanced versions of classic games. Nintendo couldn't commit to either of these possibilities becoming a mass-market reality, but we sure hope that they do.

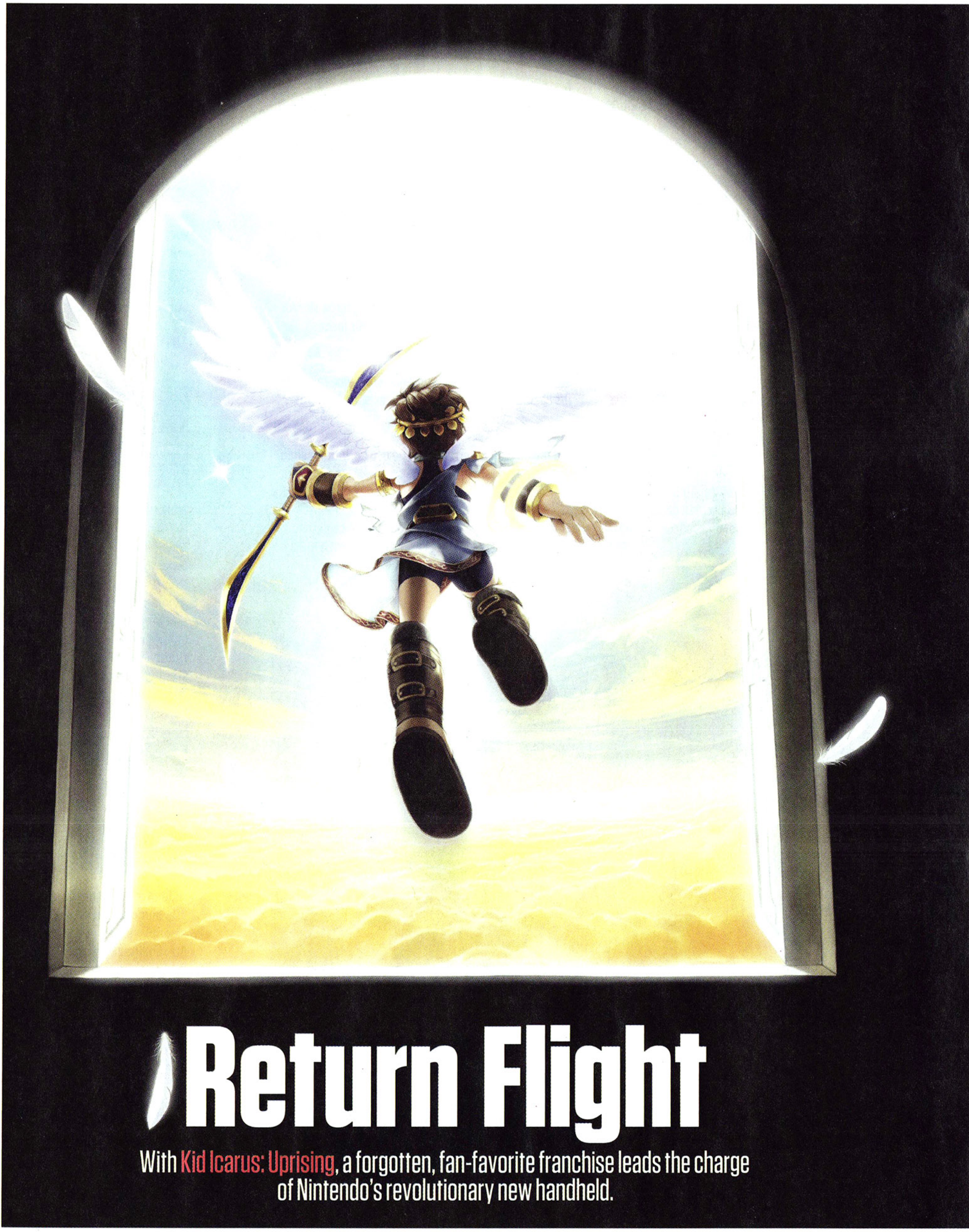
FROM THE BIG SCREEN TOTHE SMALL SCREEN

Trailers for Dreamworks's *How to Train Your Dragon*, Disney's *Tangled*, and Warner Bros.'s *Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'hoole* were shown running on the Nintendo 3DS, and they looked stunning. The images were beautiful, clear, and sharp—and, of course, no glasses are required for the 3D effect.

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW



Hidden away in the Nintendo 3DS demonstration area was a nonplayable video featuring 3D-modified versions of several NES and Super NES classics, including The Legend of Zelda, Super Mario Bros., Punch-Out!!, Metroid, Kid Icarus, Kirby's Adventure, Tennis, Excitebike, Mega Man 2, Castlevania, Super Mario World, and Yoshi's Island. The 3D was especially nifty in Punch-Out!! when Bald Bull charged down the ring.



Return Flight

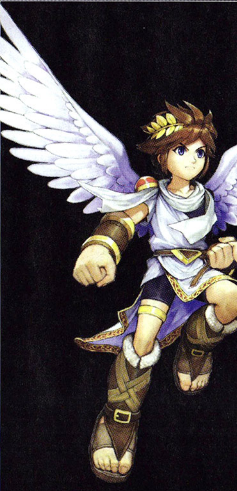
With Kid Icarus: Uprising, a forgotten, fan-favorite franchise leads the charge of Nintendo's revolutionary new handheld.

Nearly two years ago, Nintendo tapped legendary game creator Masahiro Sakurai (the man behind Kirby and Super Smash Bros.) to develop a triple-A title for the then-secret Nintendo 3DS handheld. Would Sakurai cast Mario as the star of his new game, since the plumber had successfully ushered in so many past Nintendo systems? Or perhaps Link, Samus, or Sakurai's own Kirby? The answer was none of the above. To carry the Nintendo flag into the future, a hero was chosen from the company's past. After nearly 20 years without a starring role, Pit is soaring back to superstardom with Kid Icarus: Uprising.

A Classic Comeback

If Sakurai hadn't included Pit in Super Smash Bros. Brawl, most gamers probably wouldn't have a clue as to who the boy angel is. But many longtime Nintendo fans have clamored for a Kid Icarus comeback for years, never giving up hope despite the fact that the series's 1987 NES debut spawned only a single sequel, 1991's Kid Icarus: Of Myths and Monsters for Game Boy. Sakurai tells us, however, that while he was motivated by the fact that fans still craved a new Kid Icarus, that wasn't what led him to begin development. "It all began back before Nintendo 3DS even had a name," Sakurai explains. "I was the first person outside of Nintendo that [Nintendo president] Mr. Iwata told about the new system, and we started talking about creating a game for it. But before I had any team members, I decided during the planning stage that I wanted to create something with a mythical focus, and the Kid Icarus series came to mind."

But Sakurai had no intention of simply redoing the Kid Icarus games of old. While the story, characters, and spirit of the series remain, those familiar with the previous Kid Icarus titles will find a different style of play on Nintendo 3DS. The original games were platformers, after all, while Uprising focuses on straightforward shooting and combat. Sakurai decided on a new gameplay structure early in the game's planning stages, even before it was made a Kid Icarus title. Each level is divided into three parts: a shooting sequence in the sky, a land-based battle segment, and a boss fight. Players can take the ground portions at their own pace whereas Pit's wings burn up after five minutes of flight. Why the time limit? "More than five minutes is just too long for the type of controlled and dense shooting experience that I wanted to create," says Sakurai. "The flying scenes will have events and music changes and whatnot that are timed to evoke certain reactions from the player and form a certain gameplay experience." But despite the changes to the original Kid Icarus formula, there was one element Sakurai knew he had to nail in order to truly make this a Kid



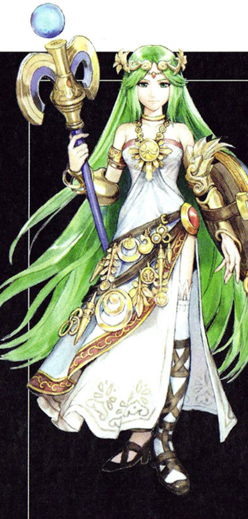
PIT

In an era filled with brooding video game heroes, Pit keeps things light with quick quips and a gung-ho attitude. In addition to his bow, Pit will master many more weapons this time around.

Icarus game. "At the time when the original Kid Icarus came out, there was an overall trend of very serious adventure games like The Legend of Zelda and Metroid. But Kid Icarus was a slightly more comical, lighthearted type of game. So it was important to maintain that. For example, in this new game, Pit talks a lot as he's fighting. And rather than being serious and steadfast about the mission at hand, you'll find him joking and being more relaxed and casual."

Controlling the Action

While Sakurai promises that experienced players will find a lot of depth to delve into, much effort is being put into making Uprising accessible to a wide range of players. This should be a relief to fans of the first Kid Icarus, which—while a great game overall—could be insanely difficult. Uprising has therefore been designed as a very straightforward, easy-to-get-into game. A key part of this plan is the title's simplified controls, which focus entirely on the L Button for firing, the Slide Pad for moving Pit, and stylus-controlled aiming and camera movement via the touch screen. Together, these three methods are used to perform a lot of different actions. Pit can dash around defensively, fire while diving to the side, and employ a wide array of offensive tactics. While Pit will carry over some of his moves from his appearance in Super Smash Bros. Brawl, many of his new attacks are being kept secret. "One thing you might notice in the trailer is that Pit changes weapons a lot," hints Sakurai. "You might even see him without a weapon at all, but with a sort of tattoo pattern on his arm. I can't go into a lot of detail, but the weapon variation is a very key and interesting part of the game. And another thing to draw your attention to is the way that Pit's shots sometimes curve—that there seems to be a sort of auto-aiming going on."

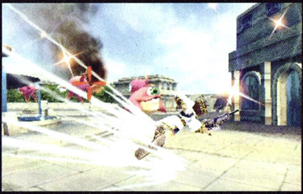


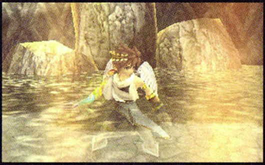
PALUTENA

The goddess of light works more closely with her hero than before and provides Pit with the miracle of flight, which allows him to battle in the sky for five minutes at a time.

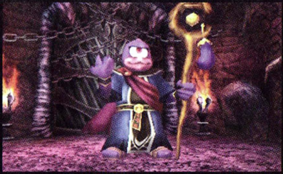
Trouble in Paradise

Kid Icarus: Uprising picks up 23 years after the NES title—just has much time has passed in the game world as in the real world—when Medusa, the goddess of darkness, returns with her underworld army to once more challenge the goddess of light, Palutena. Pit again comes to the rescue, battling updated versions of classic Kid Icarus monsters (such as the two-headed fiery dog, Twinbellows) as well as new enemies on his way to a final showdown with Medusa. The game's subtitle, Uprising, has three meanings: the uprising/revival of Pit and the Kid Icarus series, the uprising of the underworld army, and the literal uprising of Pit flying into the sky.



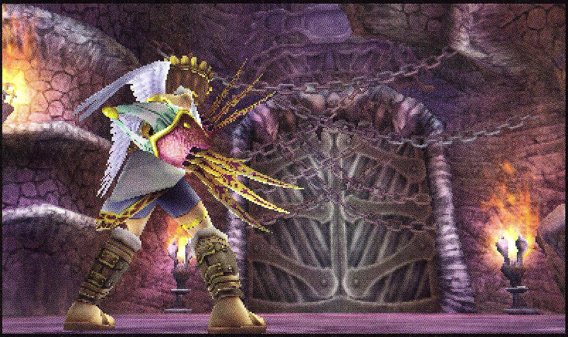


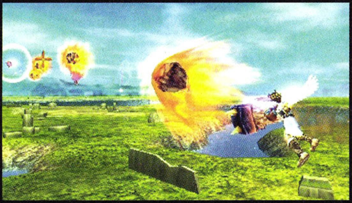
[Above left] Pit can quickly dash left or right, and even fire at his enemies while evading. [Above] In the original Kid Icarus, a dip in a hot spring would heal Pit's wounds. This scene appears to indicate that more relaxing baths await Pit in his new adventure. [Below right] The Eggplant Wizard, one of history's most awesome and hated video game villains, makes his diabolical return.



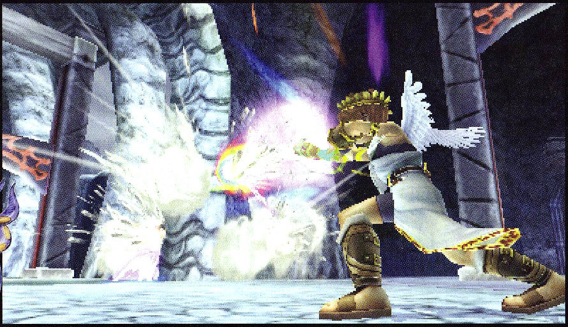
Showcasing the System

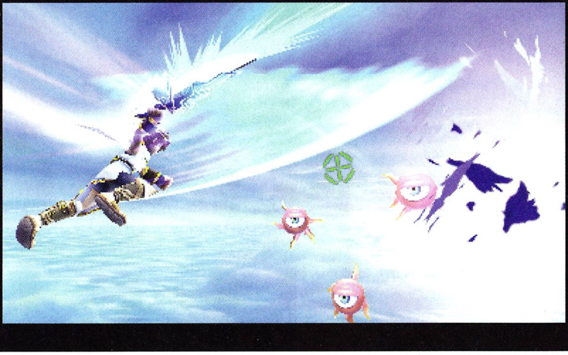
Work on Kid Icarus: Uprising began so early in the development of the Nintendo 3DS that the system's signature 3D functionality hadn't yet been added, so it's a happy accident that the game's play style is a perfect fit for the extra depth that feature provides. While Pit appears to move on the surface of the handheld, his world seems to stretch down into the system, with enemies and objects appearing at various points in the space between. This helps you judge exactly how far away things are, which makes targeting much more natural and accurate. Having said that, Sakurai assures us that the game can still be enjoyed if players decide to use the system's 3D Slider to lessen or even turn off the 3D effect. Since the main gameplay requires that you keep a firm grasp on the system, the hardware's new gyroscope and motion controls aren't used. However, Sakurai confirms that those features will be put to good use in a number of "additional features and attractions" outside the main game. This is the man, after all, who jam-packed Super Smash Bros. Brawl with a seemingly endless number of modes and loads of bonus content.





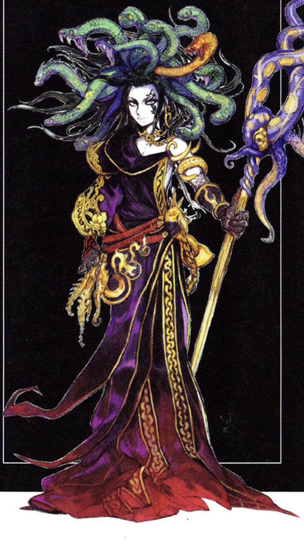
Watch the Kid Icarus: Uprising trailer closely (check it out at www.e3.nintendo.com), and you'll spot Pit slashing and shooting with an awful lot of different weapons. From claws and cannons to bows, swords, and even, apparently, blasts of rainbows, Palutena's heroic angel appears to have a devilish arsenal.





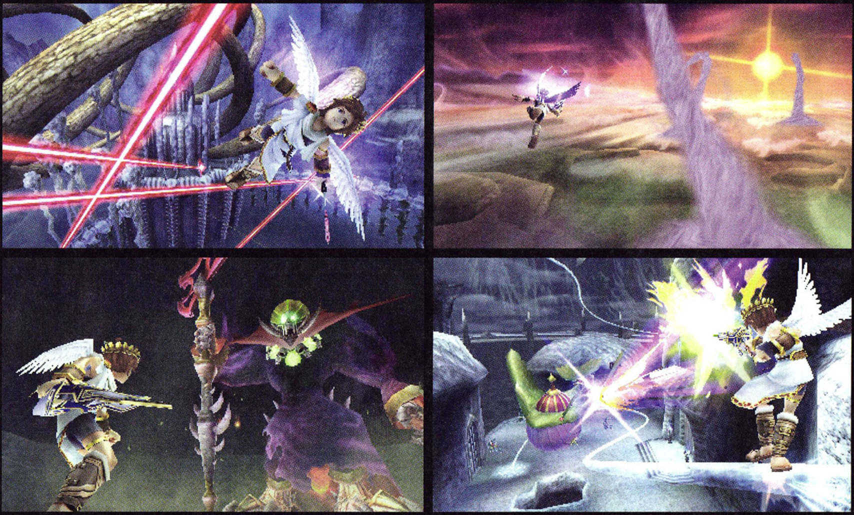
MEDUSA

After suffering defeat at Pit's hands more than two decades ago, the goddess of darkness with the venomous hairdo has returned to lead the underworld army against Palutena.



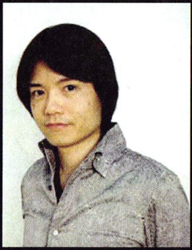
Worth the Wait

Of all the many questions that still remain unanswered about Kid Icarus: Uprising, the biggest has to be, "When can we play it?" The game has no official release timeframe—and we know only that Nintendo 3DS will be out sometime before March 2011—but Sakurai has some encouraging news. "The game has a relatively simple design for a reason: we wanted it to be ready close to launch. Of course, there are a lot of hurdles to overcome during the course of any game development, so I can't say with certainty that it will be ready at launch, but I'm definitely working with the intention of releasing the game as soon as possible." That's good news indeed for those wanting a killer game to show off their future Nintendo 3DS, and especially for Kid Icarus fans, who may find their decades-long wait for a sequel easier to swallow now that there's a very bright light at the end of the tunnel. Sakurai, at least, seems certain that our patience will be rewarded. When we thank him for finally answering the cries of the Kid Icarus faithful, he smiles and says simply, "Please bring your greatest expectations." —**CHRIS S.**



An Unforgettable Debut

When Nintendo first showed the Kid Icarus: Uprising trailer during its E3 media briefing, it was met with overwhelmingly enthusiastic applause. The Nintendo Power staff was, of course, among those frantically cheering Pit's surprising return, so we know firsthand just how well it went down. We asked the man who is helming the game what he thought of the reaction.



MASAHIRO SAKURAI In a word, I was touched. A lot of effort was put into the trailer—fitting everything into two minutes and pacing the scenes to show them at the right time; having them match the music, the mood, and achieve the desired effect. A lot of thought was given to how the fans would react to certain elements. So, my most earnest reaction to the fans' response is that of utmost happiness; I'm absolutely, totally happy about it.

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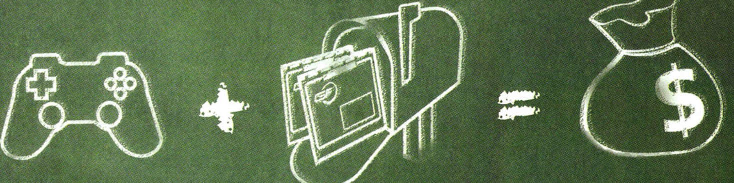

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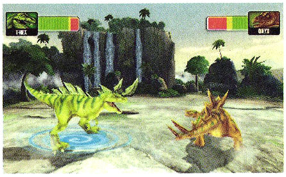
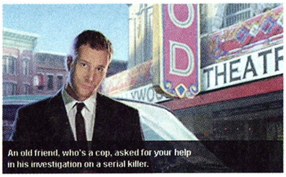


Battle of Giants: Dinosaur Strike

Judging from the title, we'd guess that this game is about dinosaurs going on strike for not having satisfactory health benefits. Or maybe it's just about dinosaurs fighting each other. Could be either one.



An old friend, who's a cop, asked for your help in his investigation on a serial killer.

Hollywood '61

There's a killer on the loose in 1960s Hollywood, and it's up to you to stop him in this puzzle-based mystery. The game will adapt to your choices and performance as you solve more than 150 puzzles of various types.

Chocobo Racing 3D

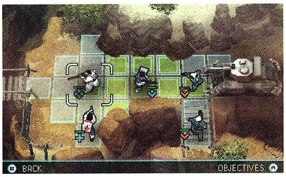
We've yet to see Chocobo Racing 3D in action, but we're amused by screenshots that show the titular mounts actually riding vehicles. It's not a bad idea; the Kentucky Derby would certainly be more exciting if the horses drove stock cars.

The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D

A lot of folks would be content with a portable, 3D-enhanced version of what many consider the greatest game ever made, but The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D goes a step further. The polygonal graphics have been rebuilt to take advantage of the Nintendo 3DS system's advanced processing power, and the interface has been refined so it's much easier to perform actions such as changing Link's boots or tunic. Producer Eiji Aonuma has revealed that the team is also considering making other adjustments to provide an improved user experience. But for the most part Ocarina of Time is just as you remember it—one of the deepest, most compelling adventures ever created. —CHRIS H.

Samurai Warriors 3D

You should know the drill by now: you are a one-man army, hacking and slashing through legions of soldiers in feudal Japan. The controls are simple, as is the 3D effect—the health bar appears to pop off the background.

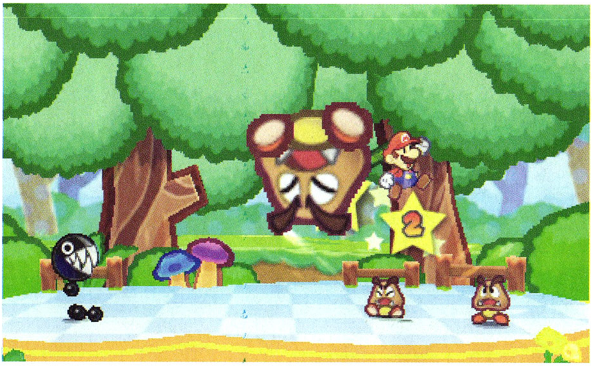


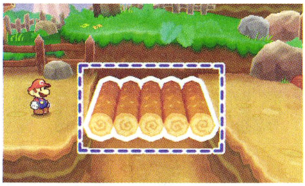
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon

This handheld iteration of Ghost Recon puts you in command of a team of elite soldiers who are charged with preventing a war. You will utilize an array of near-future military hardware to get the job done.

The Sims 3

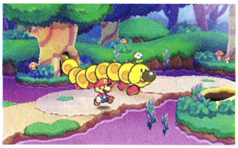
The third installment of EA's world-conquering life simulator is coming to Nintendo 3DS sometime in 2011. The game will make extensive use of the touch screen, allowing you to quickly and easily customize your character, view an overhead map, or organize your household possessions.

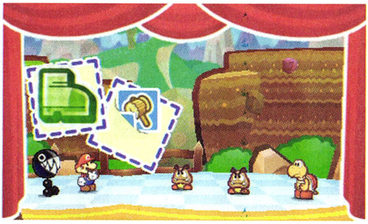




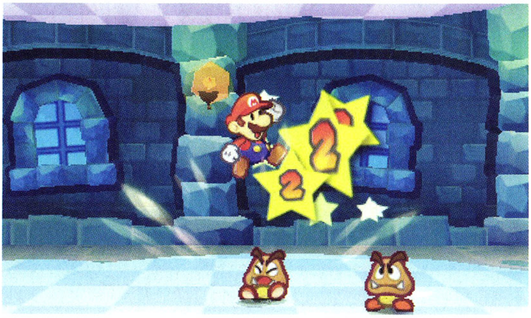
Paper Mario

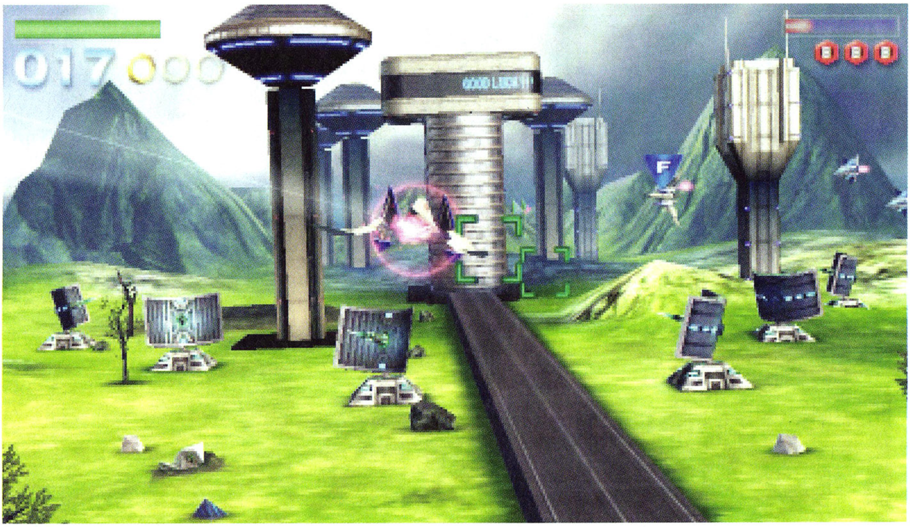
A series defined by its flat, paper-thin characters may seem an odd fit for 3D, but Paper Mario's pop-up-book art style actually benefits quite a bit from the added dimension. The different layers really stand out, especially when characters travel between the background and foreground. Judging by the brief gameplay teaser, this looks to be an all-new installment that returns the franchise to its turn-based RPG roots. Curiously, a Chain Chomp fights alongside Mario in the trailer, and it appears as if decals play an important role in both combat and exploration. Mario peels off a hammer decal during battle to pummel some Goombas (which then go flying towards the screen), and he later crosses a ravine with the help of a bridge decal. **—STEVE T.**





With its previous three games appearing on N64, GameCube, and Wii, this will mark the Paper Mario series's first appearance on a handheld (despite the fact that the Mario & Luigi games are very similar).

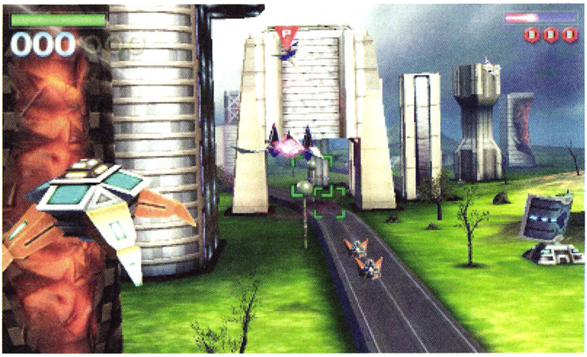




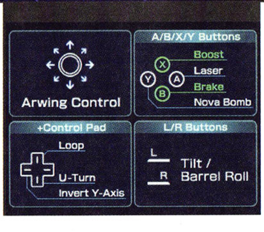
Your ship and its two targeting reticles each appear to be a different distance from you; when you move them, it really feels like you're aiming into the screen.

Star Fox 64 3D

For many space-shooter fans, the Star Fox sequels of the past decade haven't been able to match the 1997 classic Star Fox 64, which is widely held as the pinnacle of the series. The trigger-happy Arwing pilots here at Nintendo Power feel the same way, so you can understand why some of us hyperventilated a little when we got a chance to play Star Fox 64 3D, a much-improved remake with way better graphics and stereoscopic 3D. The 3D effect does wonders for the game, adding a sense of depth that helps in targeting distant enemies—plus, it just plain looks cool. The Nintendo 3DS system's analog Slide Pad also shines, offering precision control that helped us deftly avoid enemy fire and slip through tight spots. We'd love to also see an all-new Star Fox at some point, but for the moment we're thrilled to get this fresh take on one of our favorite games. **—CHRIS S.**



We never noticed it before, but playing in polygonal worlds without stereoscopic 3D is kind of a handicap. Trying Star Fox 64 3D convinced us that Nintendo 3DS could be a major turning point in gaming.

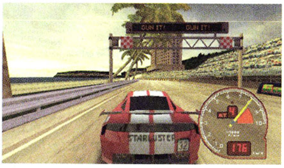


Arwing Control

A/B/X/Y Buttons
X Boost
A Laser
Y Brake
B Nova Bomb

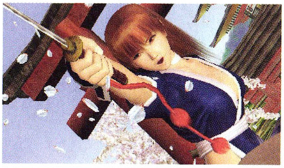
+Control Pad
Loop
U-Turn
Invert Y-Axis

L/R Buttons
L R Tilt / Barrel Roll



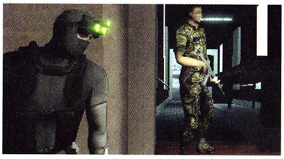
Ridge Racer

As much as we like the arcadey Ridge Racer gameplay, we had one major issue with the demo: cranking the 3D-effect slider to maximum elongated the car, making it more difficult to judge the distance between the vehicle and the wall.



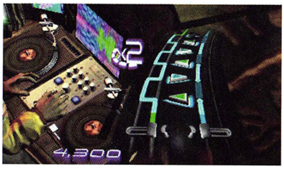
Dead or Alive 3D

The tentatively titled Dead or Alive brings the fast-paced fighting-game franchise to a handheld for the first time. You can expect lots of busts, ninjas, and busty ninjas.



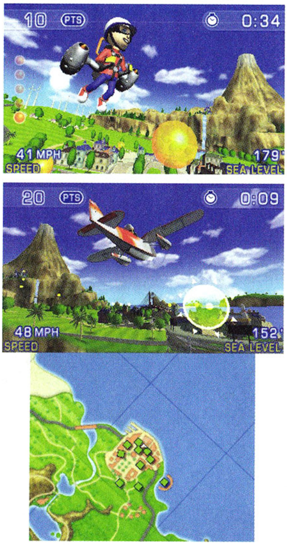
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory

The most critically lauded Sam Fisher adventure gets a 3D redesign. The basics remain the same: stick to shadows and be very, very quiet.



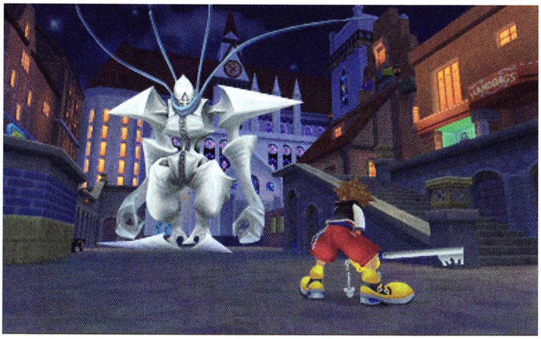
DJ Hero 3D

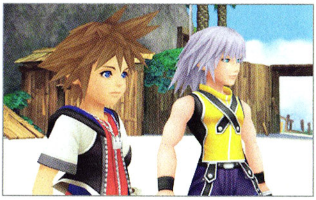
Obviously there's no turntable peripheral to accompany the Nintendo 3DS version of DJ Hero, but the gameplay is pretty similar to its console siblings nonetheless. You tap and slide with your stylus as 3D notes come down the note highway.



PilotWings Resort

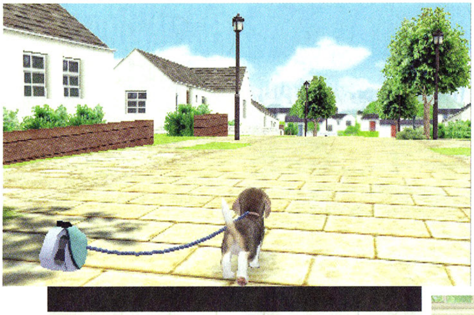
For anyone who thought flying the plane in Wii Sports Resort felt like a PilotWings game, it should come as little surprise to see both the "Resort" moniker and that title's island locale infuse the long-awaited third installment of Nintendo's beloved flight series. Nintendo has confirmed that players will be able to enjoy the airspace above Wuhu Island via jet pack, airplane, and hang glider (no word yet on any other possible events), with each using the system's new Slide Pad to offer precise analog control. PilotWings Resort gave me my first chance to try the pad, which I used to easily guide my plane through a string of airborne hoops without a single miss. Flying on Nintendo 3DS feels very, *very* good. —CHRIS S.





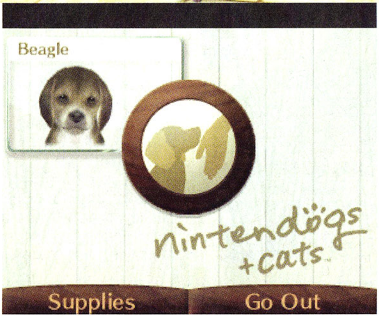
Kingdom Hearts 3DS

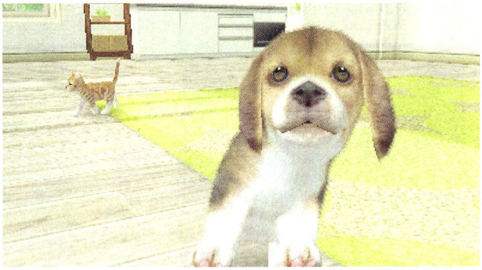
Like most Nintendo 3DS titles, Kingdom Hearts 3D is shrouded in mystery at this point. An unplayable demo shows Sora and Riku as they looked in the very first game and features a couple of familiar locales, but series mastermind Tetsuya Nomura promises that this will not be a remake of an existing title. That's further evidenced by a strange scene from the trailer in which dozens of unconscious Soras fall from the sky. —STEVE T.



Nintendogs + Cats

The irresistible puppies of Nintendogs are back, and this time they've brought some feline friends with them. Like the original Nintendogs, this sequel features numerous breeds of puppies that respond to your voice and touch-screen interactions, plus now they'll recognize your face thanks to the Nintendo 3DS Camera; not only will the dogs mimic your head movements, but they'll try to lick you if you get close to the screen. Nintendo hasn't revealed much about how the inclusion of cats will work, other than to say that they'll behave like real cats—meaning that they won't necessarily always want to play. —**CHRIS H.**

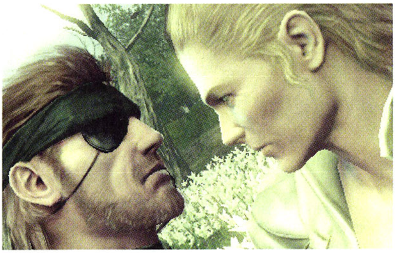




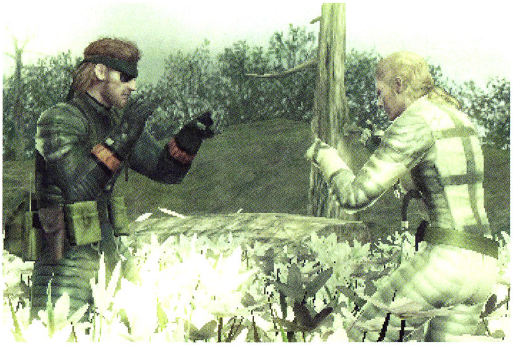
The playful interaction between puppies and kittens is a key part of the game.

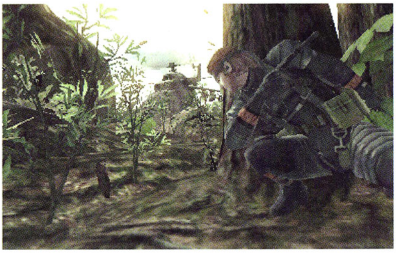
Metal Gear Solid: Snake Eater 3D

Easily one of the most exciting titles of the lot, Metal Gear Solid: Snake Eater 3D is a three-dimensional version of PlayStation 2 title Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater. Considering that the original title was one of the best games ever, that can only be a good thing. In the nonplayable demo—though you could move the camera—Snake makes his way through the jungle, avoiding enemies of both the human and animal variety, before heading into his final showdown with his mentor, The Boss. The entire experience feels epic thanks to the impressive graphics and excellent use of 3D. —**JUSTIN C.**



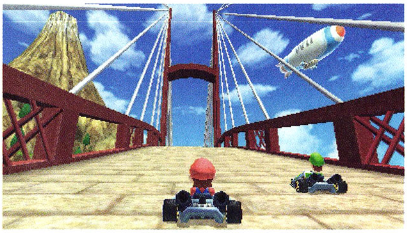
Feast your eyes on some of the best graphics shown so far on Nintendo 3DS—and these screens aren't even in 3D! The extra dimension really brings the jungle and its many inhabitants to life.

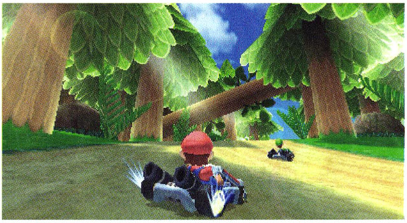


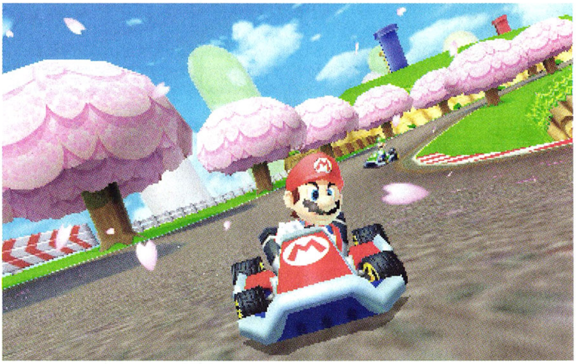


Mario Kart

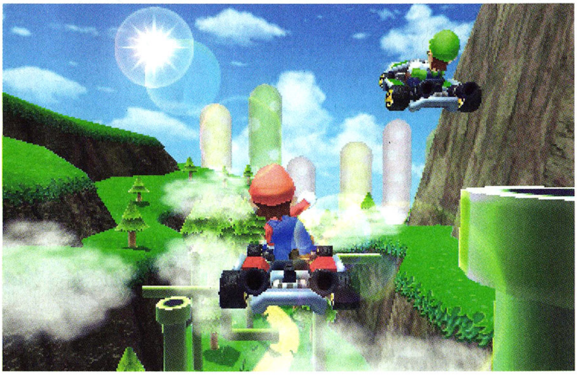
Not many game announcements can rev up excitement like a new Mario Kart, especially one in which the track speeds toward you in stereoscopic 3D. In the nonplayable 3D demo we saw running on Nintendo 3DS—in which Mario races his brother through various Mushroom Kingdom environments and even Wii Sports Resort's Wuhu Island—the 3D effect added a sense of depth that is sure to elicit a gleeful giggle from players every time they fire a Koopa Shell into the horizon. At one point Mario launched off a cliff and soared for several seconds down to the continuing track below. The 3D effect was almost dizzying, providing a rush that no previous Mario Kart stunt has come close to. The game's graphics are also impressive; when viewed on the handheld, they match up favorably with the console-powered visuals of Mario Kart Wii. Also, the game is a prime candidate to take advantage of the improved Wi-Fi functionality of the new system. While teasing the kind of content that the handheld will be able to trade wirelessly with certain Wi-Fi access points and other Nintendo 3DS systems, Nintendo president Satoru Iwata specifically mentioned ghost data, which has long been a key part of the Mario Kart series's Time Trial mode. While no other game details are known at this point, it seems clear that gaming's most enduring racing franchise is headed back to the winner's circle. —**CHRIS S.**

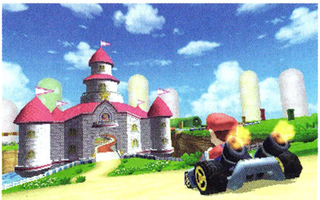


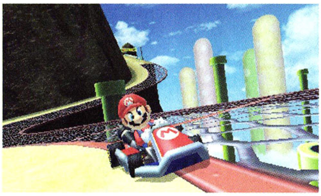


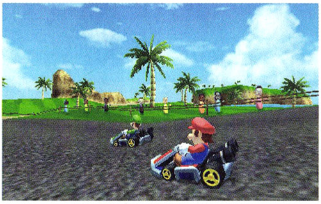


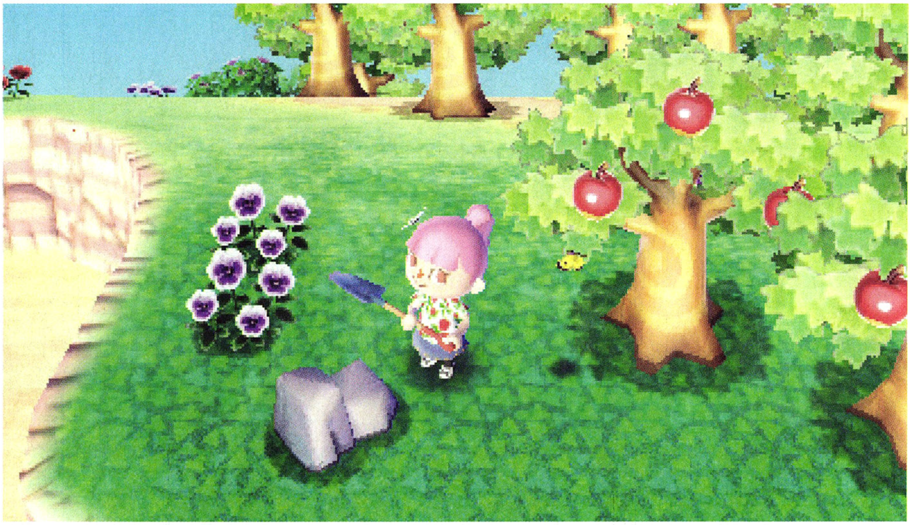
[Above] Mario appears to be driving his standard kart from Mario Kart DS. [Below] When seen in stereoscopic 3D on Nintendo 3DS, this death-defying jump is worthy of Mario's mightiest "wa-hoo!"







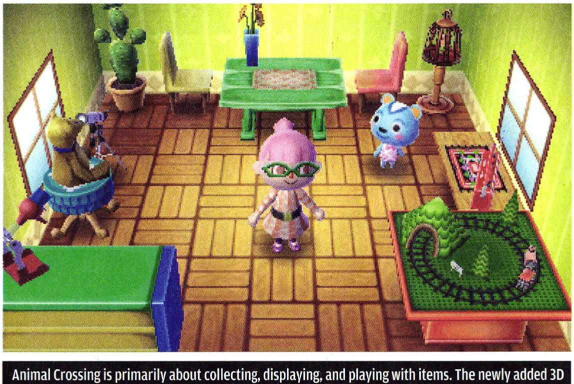




While this Animal Crossing doesn't look very different from its predecessors, when viewed on Nintendo 3DS, the 3D effect adds quite a bit to the game's charm.

Animal Crossing

The bite-sized bits of play-at-your-own-pace fun in Animal Crossing: Wild World for Nintendo DS proved the series a perfect fit for portable gaming, and it's an easy bet that the Nintendo 3DS installment will be at least as good. The added 3D effect is a perfect match for the way the ground scrolls into the horizon; it adds a sense of depth that makes the town feel as if it's made of real-world miniatures that you can pinch with your fingers. So far we've seen only the game's newly tall and thin characters going about their day in the usual Animal Crossing way, so the big question is, how much will be added to the series's familiar formula? With the many new features of Nintendo 3DS—particularly the system's improved Wi-Fi functionality—there should be plenty of creative ideas for the developers to explore. —CHRIS S.



Animal Crossing is primarily about collecting, displaying, and playing with items. The newly added 3D effects bring the items to life in a way that would be impossible to achieve any other way.

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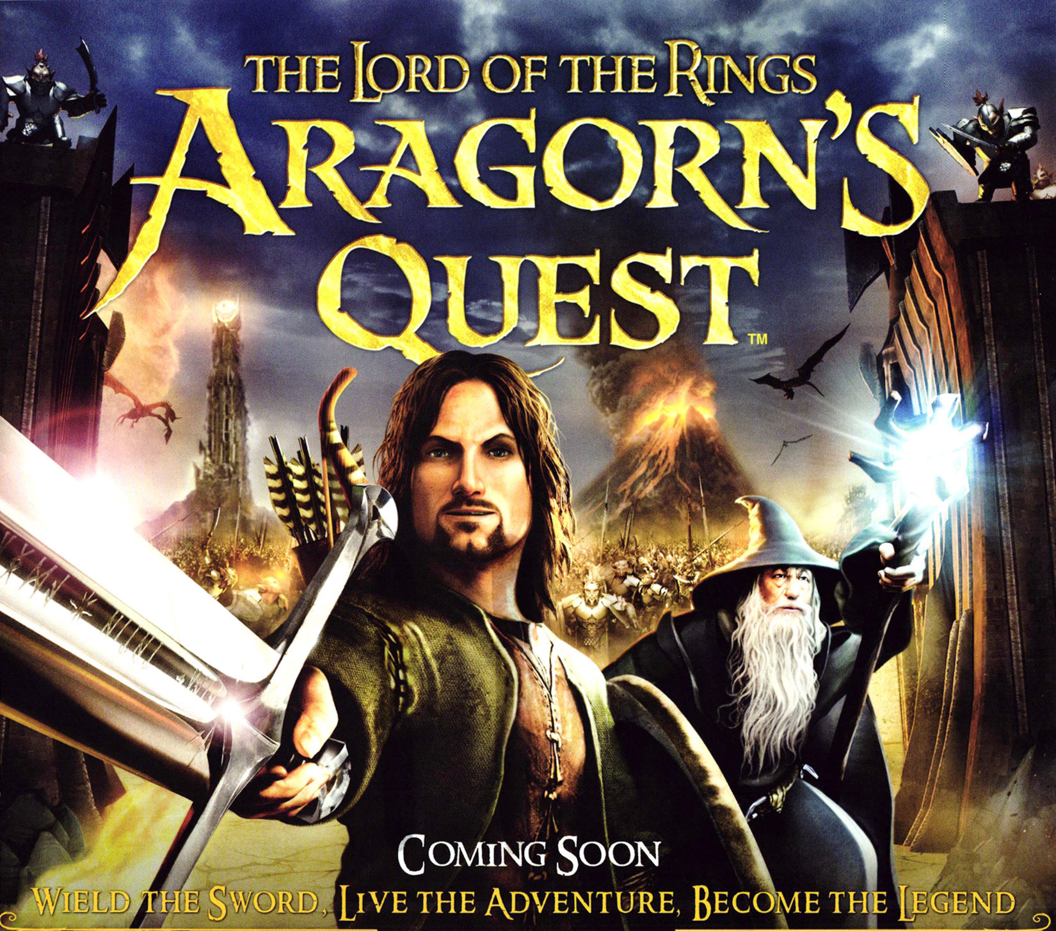
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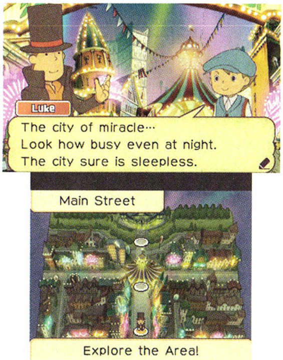
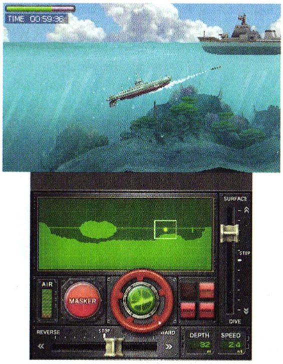


The city of miracle...
Look how busy even at night.
The city sure is sleepless.

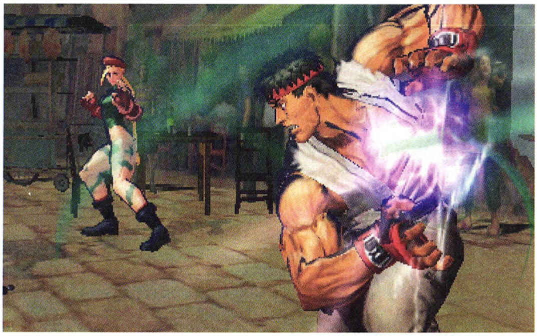
Professor Layton and the Mask of Miracle

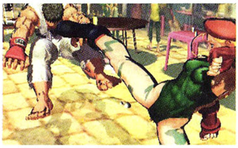
The 3D effect is surprisingly impressive for a puzzle game; the characters seem to sit directly on top of the screen while the city behind them sinks deep into it. When you investigate an area by moving around a magnifying-glass icon, it almost feels as though you're reaching through the screen to a world beyond.



Steel Diver

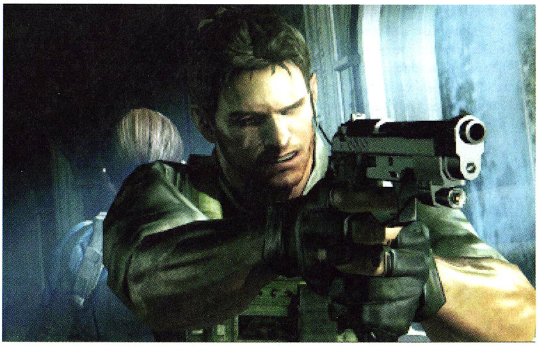
Steel Diver has an unusual history—a version of the game was first shown at E3 2004 as a tech demo for the original Nintendo DS handheld. Fast-forward more than six years, and the demo has evolved into Steel Diver—a submarine action title that combines side-scrolling gameplay with simulation-style controls that take full advantage of the touch screen. You'll need a delicate touch and a strategic mind as you manipulate switches and turn dials to control the sub's speed, pitch, and depth. You'll also unleash torpedoes at obstacles and enemy ships as you explore the undersea environs.





Super Street Fighter IV 3D Edition

Capcom's highly acclaimed fighting series returns to Nintendo systems! Already a sensation on some home consoles, Super Street Fighter IV combines polygonal graphics with the precise 2D one-on-one fighting action that the series is known for—now presented in eye-popping 3D, of course. Favorite characters such as Ryu, Guile, and Cammy duke it out, each with unique fighting styles, dynamic special moves, and devastating Super Combos. There's no word yet if there will be any changes or enhancements exclusive to this version of the game. —**CHRIS H.**



Resident Evil Revelations

The unveiling of a new Resident Evil is always cause for celebration, and our first glimpse at Revelations also highlighted the impressive horsepower of the Nintendo 3DS system. The real-time trailer boasts visuals far beyond anything we've seen from a handheld before. It also hints at a seaborne setting, the return of traditional zombies, and a tense standoff between series protagonists Jill Valentine and Chris Redfield over the fate of an unidentified captive. —**STEVE T.**

A New Point of View

After decades spent creating classic games, **Hideki Konno** turns his magic touch to Nintendo 3DS.

ATTENTIVE NINTENDO FANS probably recognize Hideki Konno as one of the company's most accomplished game designers. His résumé spans more than 20 years and includes such classics as Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island, Mario Kart 64, and Luigi's Mansion. Now, Konno is changing hats and delving into the hardware side of things as general producer for the Nintendo 3DS system. We recently spoke with him about his new role and how the handheld came to fruition.

NINTENDO POWER After spending most of your career on the software side, how did you come to be the general producer of the Nintendo 3DS hardware? Was that a role you actively pursued or were you recruited?

HIDEKI KONNO It was definitely the latter. I was instructed to oversee the Nintendo 3DS project. [Laughs] After I completed development on Mario Kart Wii, Mr. Miyamoto and Mr. Iwata came to me with a proposal, stating that for the next hardware project, they wanted to create the position of general producer. I was promoted to that position. Mr. Iwata knew that I had a reputation within Nintendo as a gadget maniac. I'm always switching my PDAs and getting the latest gadgets available. Mr. Iwata is the same way, so I think he was aware that I'm a similar type of person.

How did you find the experience of overseeing a new hardware platform? What were some of the unique challenges and rewards as compared to creating software?

The biggest difference I found was that you can't make changes very quickly during hardware development. You need to make decisions way ahead of time. Once you've put certain things in motion, it's very difficult to turn those around. As you're probably aware, Mr. Miyamoto is notorious for "upending the tea table," forcing developers to rethink certain key features. If that happened with hardware, though, we wouldn't be able to proceed with the project at all.

Another big difference is that, with software, the most important thing is having a good idea. If you have a good idea, you can make a good product. But with hardware, even though we want to pursue a high-spec product, there are always cost issues to take into consideration. It's unrealistic to include certain technologies if they make the hardware too expensive. So that particular difference between hardware and software was quite challenging.

At the Nintendo 3DS unveiling, Mr. Iwata announced a huge amount of third-party support. When did you start showing the handheld to outside developers and did you solicit their feedback during the development of the hardware?

We did listen to many opinions from both internal and third-party developers. Fortunately, they were almost all happy with our plans for Nintendo 3DS. As for when we started showing the hardware to developers, I can't go into details, but we did talk to them at an earlier stage in order to ensure a strong software lineup.

Can you talk about the decision to include the 3D-depth slider?

As you know, the slider allows the player to adjust the 3D effect incrementally from 2D to 3D. Did you have a chance to try it for yourself?

Yes.

How did you feel about it?

I think it's a great inclusion. Being able to find your own "sweet spot," which could differ from game to game, seems like it should help maximize the impact of the 3D. And sliding it back and forth really drives home how different the experience is in 3D. But it's not something that ever even occurred to me when I first heard about Nintendo 3DS.

That's good to hear. That's actually one of the things that we were pursuing– to surprise everybody. To let them feel the strangeness of going back and forth between 2D and 3D. I don't think anyone has ever seen that type of gadget before. Also, as you mentioned, the "sweet spot" is going to differ among players. There will be people who prefer a very strong 3D effect, while others will want something a bit more subdued.

This is actually one of the features that Mr. Miyamoto really pushed for. It serves two purposes. First, it makes the hardware more interesting and unique. And from a more practical standpoint, it allows users to adjust the effect to fit their own eyes. Mr. Miyamoto always says that the best ideas are ones that resolve multiple problems at once.

From beloved Nintendo franchises such as Nintendogs and The Legend of Zelda [above] to top third-party series such as Resident Evil and Metal Gear [below], Nintendo 3DS is amassing a diverse library of games that no player can ignore.

What came first: the idea to include a 3D screen in Nintendo's next handheld or the discovery that such technology was feasible?
Both, actually. [Laughs] Nintendo has explored 3D in games for more than 20 years. We released 3D glasses for the Famicom [the Japanese version of the NES]. One of the games that utilized those glasses—3D Hot Rally—was actually developed by Mr. Miyamoto and Mr. Iwata. We also released the Virtual Boy, as you probably remember. Then during the GameCube era, I was directing Luigi's Mansion and we did experiments with 3D on that game by attaching a 3D panel to the GameCube. That was about 10 years ago.

So when I was assigned the role of general producer for our next handheld, I started researching the latest technology for stereoscopic 3D panels and whether they would be feasible or not. The first experiment our team did was to adapt Mario Kart Wii and Animal Crossing: City Folk for the latest 3D panel. We presented that Mario Kart demo to our executives in the hopes of convincing them that Nintendo needed to tackle 3D gaming again. I think the squid's ink splashing at the player was what convinced Mr. Miyamoto. He said, "Now *that's* good!" [Laughs]

How will the handheld's motion controls work?
As you know, we've included both a gyro sensor and a motion sensor. The hardware specs are very close to those of the Wii MotionPlus accessory. The level of accuracy is very similar. It's probably unrealistic for users to play a motion-controlled tennis game on this platform, though. [Laughs] But there are many other possibilities that would better suit the hardware. One is using the motion controls and the camera for the aiming function of a first-person shooter—moving the handheld to move your targeting reticule. For those kinds of games, such controls may be more intuitive than using the analog slider.

Speaking of the analog slider, how did you arrive at that particular design as opposed to a more traditional analog stick?
We realized that analog controls were important for polygonal games, though, so we conducted lots of experiments on what would be the most suitable analog solution for a handheld. Ultimately, this slider seemed to work best.

The graphic capabilities of this hardware are pretty impressive and obviously represent a huge leap over the original Nintendo DS. Were better graphics a priority from the get-go?
Yes, definitely. We wanted to do things that were not possible on the previous handheld. For example, I'm developing Nintendogs + Cats, and I really wanted to realize the sense of fur on the pets.

The first Nintendogs was released in three different versions, each of which included unique breeds. Is there a similar plan in place for Nintendogs + Cats?
We cannot comment on that at this point in time. Mr. Miyamoto and I are still considering the various possibilities. To be honest, when we released the first game, we planned to create 20 different versions! [Laughs] We wanted to recreate the experience of going to the pet store and having to choose whether you wanted to bring home a Chihuahua or a Labrador or whatever. But we were scolded by the sales team. They said, "There's no way we can get that much shelf space!" [Laughs] So we had to scale back that idea. Anyway, we might take a different approach with the new game, but we haven't made a final decision yet.

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GAME BOY

Konno has long pursued the idea of 3D gaming—he even tested the effect with Luigi's Mansion by attaching a 3D panel to a GameCube 10 years ago.

I love the widescreen format for the top display on the Nintendo 3DS, but why are the two screens different sizes this time around?
If we were to make the touch screen wider, we would have had to push all of the buttons and everything further out, and if we did that, the hardware would have to be larger. One of our goals for the Nintendo 3DS was to make it as light and compact as possible. There was also the consideration of backwards compatibility with Nintendo DSi.

To make it as compact as possible was really one of our key objectives, though. We want consumers to be able to put it in their bags and bring it out any time they leave their homes. We would like them to go outside and enjoy the enhanced wireless experience. So in order to motivate consumers to bring the Nintendo 3DS with them, we wanted to make it as light and compact as possible.

To approach it from a different angle, then, why did you decide to go ahead with the larger screen for the top display? Was it just an instance of, "We can make it bigger, so why not?"
Wii supports widescreen games, as well, so as a software developer, I can attest that everyone welcomes a larger screen! [Laughs]

Will the Nintendo 3DS retain the previous handheld's connectivity with the Wii console?
Connectivity between a console and handheld has become something of a tradition at Nintendo, so we are going to continue offering those features. I can't go into any more detail than that, unfortunately. Sorry!

Will DSiWare continue on the new handheld, and will DSi owners be able to transfer their downloads to the Nintendo 3DS?
We can't go into specifics about that, but at Nintendo, I think we should take care of how consumers feel about those types of things and owning content.

Among the E3 demonstrations was a video for NES and Super NES games in 3D. Is that hinting as some sort of 3D Virtual Console?
That's another area for which we can't go into detail right now. [Laughs] But we're interested in the reaction of the E3 attendees, so I would like to ask you how you feel about the 3D NES games.

It's definitely something I'd love to see. Everyone I talked to at the show was pretty excited about it.
We will definitely take your opinion into consideration. [Laughs]

Would you like to continue in this new role overseeing hardware? Might you be involved with Nintendo's next home console, for example?
My mission right now is to concentrate on the Nintendo 3DS and ensure its success. Before this, I had developed software for more than 20 years, but I never felt as if I was done with software. I always have regrets and I always learn key lessons that I want to apply to my next project. It's a never-ending process, in my view. I think that will probably be the case for hardware, as well. I'm sure there will be lessons and challenges that I'd like to take to the next step. So if there's an opportunity, I would really like to be involved in future hardware projects.

Finally, you mentioned Luigi's Mansion earlier, so we have to ask: have you given any thought to a sequel for that game? It seems like it would be a great fit for the Nintendo 3DS.
When I did the experiments with Luigi's Mansion and the aforementioned 3D panel for the GameCube 10 years ago, I found that game was indeed a great match for 3D. So there may be a chance that you can see a sequel for the Nintendo 3DS in the future.

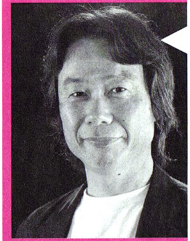
Words from the Wise

Some of the video game industry's most renowned creators share their unbridled enthusiasm for the Nintendo 3DS.

My first impression of it was, "This is the toy of the future." You can feel just how far and how fast games have evolved when you see the Nintendo 3DS. We've entered an era where we can bring worlds that we can almost touch and feel to life. Thus far, 3D has only been expressed with 2D. I think we've graduated from that and reached an age of expressing real depth through 3D with the 3DS.

GOICHI SUDA (SUDA 51)
President & director,
Grasshopper Manufacture

When playing in a fully rendered world with polygonal graphics, I think it's been difficult for a lot of people to judge depth and space in those worlds. Sometimes you might see an object and not really be able to tell if it's small and close by, or if it's big but far away. Or, in a Mario game in particular, if you're trying to hit a question-mark block from underneath, it can be hard to identify precisely where that block is in space; even trying to jump on top of a tree stump can be very difficult. But the 3D effect gives you that depth perception, that spatial relationship between objects, and it makes navigating those worlds much easier. So, games will change in ways that take advantage of that depth and height; that spatial relationship.

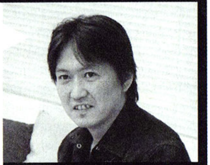


SHIGERU MIYAMOTO
General Manager, Entertainment Analysis & Development Division, Nintendo Co., Ltd.

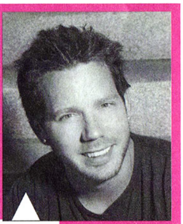
I've stood in line for a lot of Nintendo unveils over the years, but even expecting to be amazed, seeing the Nintendo 3DS in person induced a sort of visual shell-shock. The system is as hypnotic as Turkish Delight and looks like a Hogwarts newspaper. The demos that showed games, movies, and photography in the third dimension had to be seen firsthand to be truly appreciated, with elements popping off the glass or dipping into the distance. When my play time was over and the friendly (but strong) Nintendo lady wrenched the system away, my phone, laptop, and other devices became flat, boring wastes of Z-space by comparison. But what excites me the most about this fancy pants new technology is that it's in the hands of Nintendo, so the games are going to be as brilliant as the machine itself. Can! Not! Wait!

MATT BOZON
Creative director, WayForward

At Sonic Team, we're already studying the Nintendo 3DS. We're very interested in the platform. We think the depth of 3D could really help the sense of speed, especially when you're playing Sonic from the behind-the-back perspective.

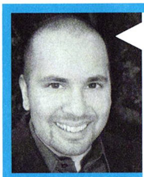


TAKASHI IIZUKA
Producer, Sonic Team



I dig it! It's like having a crisp little 3D diorama in your hands. Also, send over a handful to me early, please.

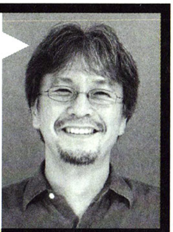
CLIFF BLESZINSKI
Design director,
Epic Games



TYRONE RODRIGUEZ
Producer, Nicalis

It doesn't matter whether you're a developer, a hardcore gamer, or don't play games at all. The technology behind the 3DS, simply put, is incredible. Prior to seeing it in action, I was honestly a bit skeptical that the the new console could pull off a believable 3D image sans glasses. But it works!

Obviously it has so much potential. I really, really think that there's a lot that can be done with it. I mean, we started working on Ocarina of Time for 3DS, and really got an idea of how we can treat the vast expanses of Hyrule and how we can show those in a different way using the technology at hand. That being said, there are some things being done with the Nintendo 3DS that have exceeded my expectations; some of the things where I thought "that would be really great in 3D"—not so much. So it's really a learning curve for all of us, trying to figure out what we can do with that to bring new elements into gameplay. But with Nintendo 3DS, it's not just the 3D capabilities. We have that plus the touch screen; we have that plus the motion sensor. And it's a portable handheld system. You take all of those elements together and look at all the potential that is inherent in all that—I think there's just a lot of great things we'll be able to do going forward.

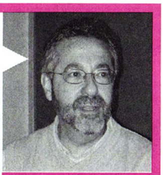


EIJI AONUMA
Manager of Software Development Group No. 3, EAD Software Development Department, Entertainment Analysis & Development Division, Nintendo Co., Ltd.

It's been a lot of fun working with 3D visuals and the Nintendo 3DS hardware. Up until now, when developers have compared game systems, the focus has been on whether the hardware's graphics and AI are good or bad; it's been this battle to squeeze power out of the hardware. It feels like this time, because of the 3D visuals, a lot of attention has moved away from those things and developers are freed up to just have fun with what 3D offers.

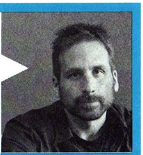
MASAHIRO SAKURAI
Director of the Board
Project Sora Co., Ltd.
Sora Ltd.

3DS rocks! I was backstage at the press conference and, like, every new feature was unbelievable! I knew it was 3D, but it's got a 3D camera?! I can [potentially] watch 3D movies without glasses?! If he had said it had a phone in it, I would have stormed the stage and stolen the prototype. It's unbelievable. I was telling some guys from Nintendo yesterday: I want the first one off the line. I'm not waiting for the second. I want the first one off the line. It's unbelievable.



WARREN SPECTOR
VP & creative director, Junction Point

Great, now my bedside table is going to have an iPhone, an iPad, and a Nintendo 3DS. I think the question for how much attention the new Nintendo hotness will get is, like always, based on software, on games. Is somebody going to be able to make the darn thing sing? Or is it going to be a shovel-ware extravaganza (but now in glorious 3D!). Nintendo makes insanely good first-party stuff; we'll see if the rest of us devs can follow suit.



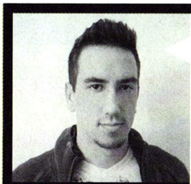
KEN LEVINE
President & creative director, Irrational Games

YUJI NAKA
President & CEO, Prope

My first impressions are very good. To be honest, I was really surprised. Nintendo kept this hidden for a long time; a lot of the creators I spoke to hadn't seen it until [E3]. Everyone was surprised by how many features are packed into the hardware—the two cameras, the motion sensor, the gyroscope, etc. I would love to create something using all of those tools. Before I went to E3, I was kind of skeptical. But now that I've held it and played it, I'm just blown away. The graphic performance is really impressive, as well. So I definitely want to be involved in making something for it.

I haven't had a chance to check it out yet! But I was able to see the dev kit, and I thought it was very interesting. I have many kinds of ideas [for Nintendo 3DS], but I don't know if all those ideas are possible. I'll have to test it and see what I can do.

KOJI IGARASHI
Producer, Konami



JEREMIAH SLACZKA
Cofounder & creative director, 5th Cell

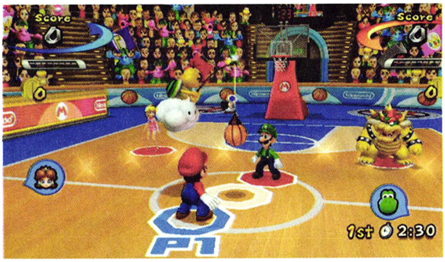
I've been playing around with some concepts for the 3DS for a while now. I'm really interested in not just the 3D screen, but also how to utilize new additions like the 3D camera and the new connectivity options. The 3D cam is pretty trippy. I could be wrong, but I think the 3DS offers the first consumer-grade 3D camera out there. Also, after doing five games on the DS we've pretty much tapped all of its potential in terms of sheer, raw power, so I'm glad to see the 3DS has a lot more horsepower than the previous system.

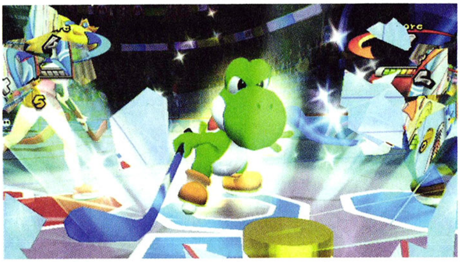
Plumber, Hero, Baller

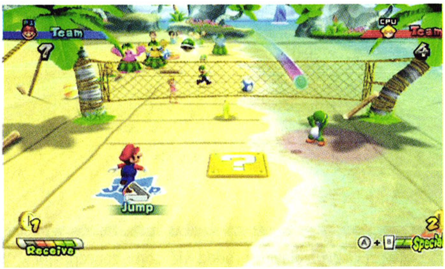
The Mushroom Kingdom athletics department gets another expansion with **Mario Sports Mix**.

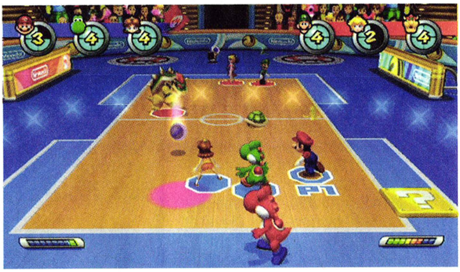
HE MAY NOT LOOK THE PART, but Mario has proven quite the jock over the years, competing everywhere from the golf links to the soccer pitch to Olympic stadiums. The modern-day Bo Jackson looks to continue his athletic pursuits in 2011 with Mario Sports Mix for the Wii console. Four activities—volleyball, basketball, ice hockey, and dodgeball—will comprise the collection, which is in development at Square Enix. As odd a pairing as that may seem, it's not without precedent: the makers of Final Fantasy were also responsible for 2006's Mario Hoops 3-on-3.

Not surprisingly, Mario Sports Mix is pretty light on sim elements. (Though for the record, we'd love to see a realistic take on plumbers, gorillas, and man-sized turtles playing dodgeball.) Instead, you'll find plentiful power-ups for wreaking havoc on your opponents, flashy signature moves that are nigh impossible to stop, and colorful venues rife with traps and bonus opportunities. Each sport will utilize relatively simple motion controls and support up to four players for two-on-two contests. No word yet on whether any Final Fantasy characters will make it into this mix (as they did in Mario Hoops), but we bet a Cactuar could throw a mean body check. **—STEVE T.**



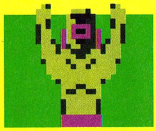


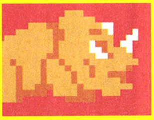




A WINNER IS...

Nintendo's mind-blowing E3 showing. Bravo!





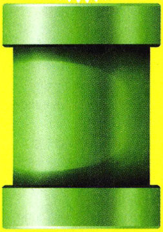
DODONGO DISLIKES...

Cyclopses, pirates, and anyone who can't see 3D.

WARP ZONE

What we were writing about way back when

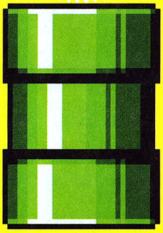
5 YEARS AGO



MAN'S BEST FRIEND

He's dark, he's brooding, and he's packing heat! He's Shadow the Hedgehog, and five years ago he led a Sega invasion of Nintendo Power that included Sonic Rush for DS and Sonic Gems Collection for GameCube. The issue also contained a feature article on the then-recently released Nintendogs, in which NP writer Andy Myers compared owning a virtual puppy to his raising real-life pooch, Milo.

10 YEARS AGO



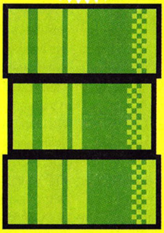
Pokémon Gold Version & Silver Version

Catch 'Em Both

The Expanding World of Pokémon

The September 2000 cover story focused on two of the most anticipated releases of the year: Pokémon Gold Version and Pokémon Silver Version. Widely considered some of the best titles in the Pokémon series, these games were the inspiration for Pokémon HeartGold Version and Pokémon SoulSilver Version, which were released earlier this year for the Nintendo DS handheld. The Pokémon excitement didn't stop there; one of the month's biggest games was Pokémon Puzzle League for the Nintendo 64.

20 YEARS AGO



Nintendo Power Library Reference Copy

Nintendo Power

Maniac Mansion

Weirdos, Heroes and Space Cadets

Mission: Impossible

Kickle Cubicle

Plus Previews

TMNT: The Arcade Game, Solar Jetman

Special

Giant Game Boy Feature

Nintendo THE SOURCE FOR NES PLAYERS STRAIGHT FROM THE PROS

On the cover of Volume 16 of Nintendo Power was...a house. That's right—a house. The game the house represented—NES adventure Maniac Mansion—was actually pretty darn cool, but showing a house on the cover is kind of an odd choice, even if it did have tentacles coming out of it. Notable releases that month were Capcom's infamous Street Fighter 2010: The Final Fight and Sunsoft's Journey to Silius, which you can read about in this month's Playback.

You're a Dancing (and Singing) Machine

Bob
12500
Paula
2500
GOOD

Born performers will have their hands (and feet, and throats) full come fall, when a quartet of music games hits Wii. From Ubisoft we'll get **Just Dance 2** and an as-yet-untitled **Michael Jackson**-themed dance game. The former promises hit tracks and plenty of party-appropriate action, while the MJ game invites players to relive iconic Jackson performances. Not to be outdone, Konami will roll out **DanceDanceRevolution** and **Karaoke Revolution: Glee**. DDR highlights include Choreography mode, which uses multiple input devices to precisely track movement, and enhanced multiplayer. KR: Glee will allow fans of the hit TV show to sing along to clips from the first 13 episodes. —**PATRICK C.**

A New End?

During a recent chat with producer Tetsuya Nomura, we asked about the likelihood of a follow-up to one of our all-time favorite Nintendo DS titles, The World Ends with You. His response: "I'm really happy that the game was so well received in North America. I definitely want to make a sequel. I'm very busy working on other titles right now, but when the time is right, I would love to make another installment of The World Ends with You."

Talk of the Show

We catch up with **Cammie Dunaway**, Nintendo's executive vice president of sales and marketing, to chat about the company's historic showing at this year's E3.

SEEMINGLY ALWAYS in a great mood, Nintendo VP Cammie Dunaway was in especially high spirits at this year's big show. She seemed as eager as we were to discuss the mind-blowing Nintendo news that dominated E3, so we pulled up a chair and got talking. —**CHRIS H.**

NINTENDO POWER **What do you think of the response that Nintendo received to this year's showing?**
CAMMIE DUNAWAY It is so gratifying and so humbling. We believe that we have the very best fans in the world, and there's nothing that makes us happier than seeing them excited about what we have to offer.

Going into this year's show, what was most important for Nintendo to accomplish?
I think what was most important was to show that Nintendo continues to innovate, and that we never rest on our laurels. We always want to be pushing the frontier of new gaming experiences. The 3DS really, really delivers on that promise. The second thing was to show that we truly have games that appeal to everyone, regardless of their level of experience, their gender, or age. And so being able to show a really broad catalog was an important thing. The third thing that I would point to is that we wanted to show that there's tremendous third-party support for our platforms. [Not just for] 3DS, but also being able to unveil GoldenEye 007 for Wii, being able to have Warren Spector demonstrate Epic Mickey, being able to bring back NBA Jam. I think people walking away from the show can see that there are games that can really deliver regardless of what your gaming preference is.

What's it like trying to get ready for a show of this magnitude? I mean, you had an army of people come out with 3DS systems!
It's a lot of work getting ready for E3, but it's a lot of fun, too. This year we needed to take a different approach because 3DS is a device that you have to see to believe. Words can't describe it. You can't use video to describe it. And I think that there are a lot of great 3D experiences out there right now, but there's also a lot of not-so-good 3D experiences. And so people were a little skeptical, and we felt like we had to put it into people's hands immediately. We didn't want to wait 30 minutes for people to go from our show over to the show floor, so that required tackling it in a new way.

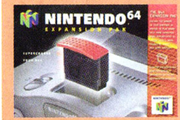
There wasn't much WiiWare or DSiWare on display. What should we expect from the future of those services?
Well, you should continue to expect great games to come out every week.... Also, I think you can expect continued innovation and connectivity. The 3DS is really going to do some things in a new way, so your local connection with friends will be vastly improved, because rather than only being able to exchange information if you're both playing the same game at the same time, you're going to be able to exchange information even if you're playing something different. Also, we're going to be able to push content out to consumers. So, for example, I love Professor Layton. I have occasionally [downloaded] new puzzles for Professor Layton, but I kind of forget to do it. With the 3DS, I'll open my 3DS in the morning, and who knows what puzzles will be waiting for me, or what new quests in Dragon Quest. So that's something that we're really excited about in the whole digital arena.

What do you think of what the "other guys" had to show?
I think that you've got to have great software. It's not just about the technology, about your input device. It's about the total experience. And that's something that nobody does better than Nintendo.

Communicating what's great about the 3DS to consumers will present a unique challenge. Any thoughts on that?
We haven't really started working on our sales and marketing plans. I've got to focus on selling product through the holidays. But certainly, hands-on experience is going to be key. Working with retailers to get interactives out. Sampling is a big part of our mix. We've got to figure out how to involve Nintendo Power readers or something.

Yes! I agree with that. Will it be a challenge to support users for both 3DS and the existing DS?
Consumers respond to options, and part of the reason that we've been able to set records last holiday season and continue to have great growth this year on the DS platform is because there are options. So for new consumers coming into handheld gaming for the first time, the DS Lite has a really accessible price point. And then DSi offers richer features for people who want a more immersive experience and want to be able to get digital content, want to be able to use the cameras, use the music. And then DSi XL is great for people who really want to get a full, big-screen view of their favorite games. So choice will continue to be an important part of our strategy, and provided we can offer choice, and provided we can continue to offer great content, I think that's what's really required.

POWER QUIZ



EASY

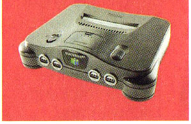
What was the first game to require the Nintendo 64 Expansion Pak?

AVERAGE

What game was included with the Pokémon Pikachu edition of the Nintendo 64 system?

HARDCORE

What was the last game to be released for the Nintendo 64, and in what year was it released?



ANSWERS EASY: Donkey Kong 64. AVERAGE: Hey You, Pikachu! HARDCORE: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 in 2002.

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STAR POWER

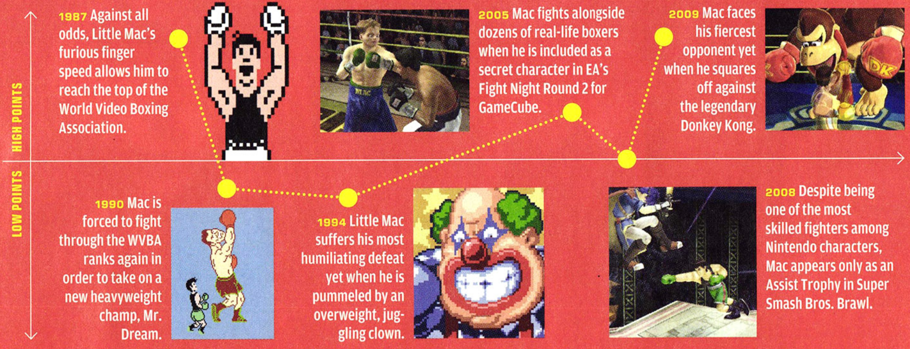
A closer look at the characters we love

Little Mac

FIRST APPEARANCE:
PUNCH-OUT!!
NES, 1987

There's only one character so exciting that any game that he stars in requires two exclamation points.

CAREER GRAPH



1987 Against all odds, Little Mac's furious finger speed allows him to reach the top of the World Video Boxing Association.

2005 Mac fights alongside dozens of real-life boxers when he is included as a secret character in EA's Fight Night Round 2 for GameCube.

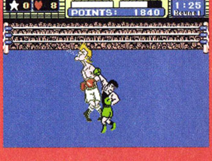
2009 Mac faces his fiercest opponent yet when he squares off against the legendary Donkey Kong.

1990 Mac is forced to fight through the WVBA ranks again in order to take on a new heavyweight champ, Mr. Dream.

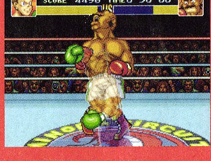
1994 Little Mac suffers his most humiliating defeat yet when he is pummeled by an overweight, juggling clown.

2008 Despite being one of the most skilled fighters among Nintendo characters, Mac appears only as an Assist Trophy in Super Smash Bros. Brawl.

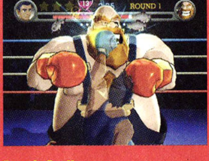
OUR FAVORITE LITTLE MAC GAMES



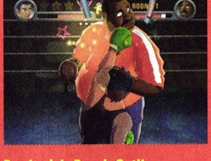
Punch-Out!!
NES, 1987
Little Mac's debut may technically be a sports game, but the gameplay—which heavily relies on reading your opponents' moves and launching quick counterattacks—makes it feel more like a puzzle game.



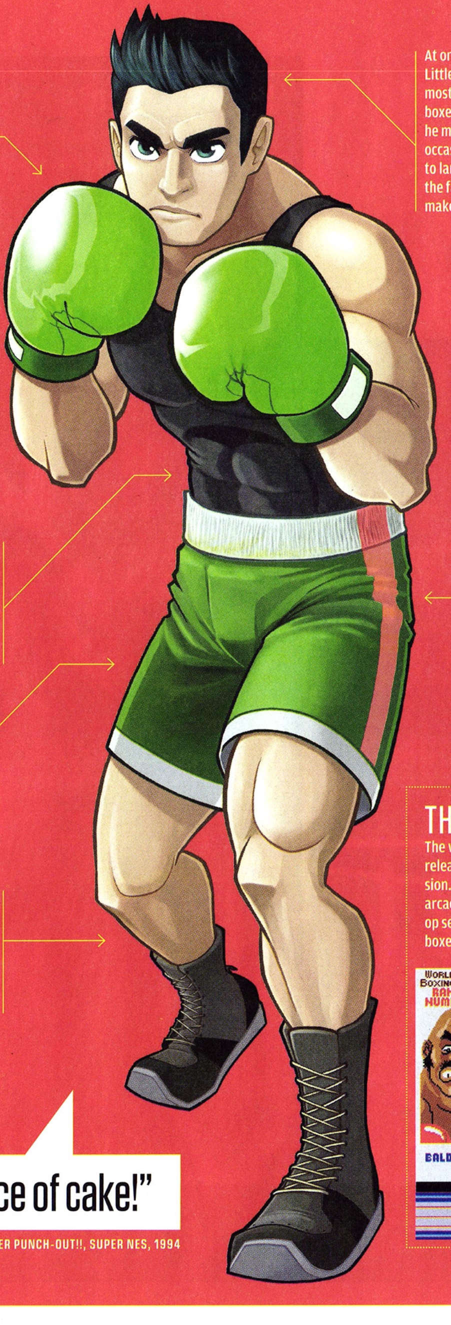
Super Punch-Out!!
SUPER NES, 1994
Updated graphics and a fresh batch of challengers aren't the only new additions here. Mac's old "star uppercuts" have been replaced by a Special gauge that fills as he fights, making his punchers more powerful.



Punch-Out!!
Wii, 2009
This is essentially a remake of Little Mac's first shot at the WVBA championship. This time, however, he can transform into the fearsome Giga Mac during the game's new split-screen multiplayer mode.



Doc Louis's Punch-Out!!
Wii, 2009
Doc Louis has always been there for Little Mac since the beginning. He trained Mac, and provided helpful tips in between rounds. In this Club Nintendo exclusive game, Mac finally got to spar against his coach.



This is where Mac stores his hurtin' bombs. When some chump sees a blur of green speeding toward his head, he knows that pain will soon follow—all he can do is hope that Mac hasn't unleashed his patented Star Punch.

Although most boxers choose to fight bare-chested, Little Mac usually sports a tank top. Heck, he'd probably wear his pink sweat suit in the ring if they'd let him.

Little Mac likes shorts! They're comfy and easy to wear!

Look at those legs! They're like two muscular tree trunks. Those are the type of legs that can only be earned after hours of running after Doc Louis as he bikes through the city.

At only 5' 7" tall, Little Mac isn't the most intimidating boxer around. Sure, he may have to occasionally jump to land a jab to the face, but Mac makes it work.

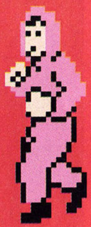
Little Mac is usually shown wearing green (his original NES color), but in Punch-Out!! for Wii, his color scheme changes as he works his way up through the ranks.

> "Piece of cake!"

FROM SUPER PUNCH-OUT!!, SUPER NES, 1994

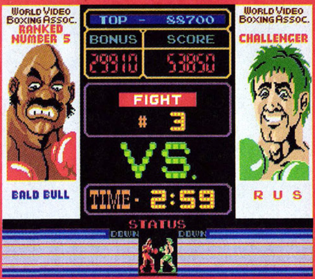
CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN

Boxers are tough. You'd have to be to go toe-to-toe against the likes of King Hippo and Super Macho Man. Some think that tough guys need to look tough, too, but Little Mac doesn't buy into that. That's why he has no problem sporting a sassy pink sweat suit when he goes out to train. You go, Mac! We think you look fabulous.



THE ORIGINAL CONTENDER

The very first Punch-Out!! title was an arcade game released in 1984, three years before the NES version. However, Little Mac was not the star of the arcade version. In both that game and its 1985 coin-op sequel, the main character was a green-haired boxer known only as "The Challenger."



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Who's the Boss?

These figures are the perfect splurge for anyone who's excited to see Snake Eater hit Nintendo 3DS.

Hangin' Around

These are cool, but if you attach Princess Peach to your keys, you're just asking for them to be stolen.

Beautiful Bounty

This 9.5-inch Zero Suit Samus statue from First 4 Figures is gorgeous, and thankfully won't self destruct.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK MADEO

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GAME FORECAST

READERS' MOST WANTED

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Wii

1. The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword
2. Kirby's Epic Yarn
3. Metroid: Other M
4. Donkey Kong Country Returns
5. Epic Mickey

NINTENDO DS

1. Pokémon White Version
2. Pokémon Black Version
3. Super Scribblenauts
4. Mario vs. Donkey Kong: Miniland Mayhem
5. Professor Layton and the Unwound Future

NINTENDO 3DS

1. Paper Mario
2. The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D
3. Mario Kart
4. Kid Icarus: Uprising
5. Star Fox 64 3D

Wii		
AAA Lucha Libre Heroes of the Ring	Konami	10/10
Active Life Explorer	Namco Bandai	FALL 10
Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader? Back to School	THQ	FALL 10
Babysitting Mama	Majesco	HOL 10
Bakugan Battle Brawlers: Defenders of the Core	Activision	10/10
Batman: The Brave and the Bold: The Videogame	Warner Bros.	9/10
Battle vs. Chess	SouthPeak	10/10
Beastly	Storm City	Q1 11
Ben 10 Ultimate Alien: Cosmic Destruction	D3Publisher	10/10
Beyblade: Metal Fusion—Battle Fortress	Hudson	FALL 10
The Biggest Loser Challenge	THQ	FALL 10
Call of Duty: Black Ops	Activision	11/10
Camaro: Wild Ride	Storm City	11/10
Cars Toon: Mater's Tall Tales	Disney	FALL 10
Club Penguin Game Day!	Disney	9/10
Conduit 2	Sega	FALL 10
DanceDanceRevolution	Konami	Q4 10
de Blob: The Underground	THQ	SPR 11
Deadliest Catch: Sea of Chaos	Crave	11/10
Deca Sports 3	Hudson	FALL 10
Def Jam Rapstar	Konami	10/10
Disney Channel All Star Party	Disney	FALL 10
Disney Sing It: Party Hits	Disney	FALL 10
DJ Hero 2	Activision	FALL 10
Donkey Kong Country Returns	Nintendo	HOL 10
Driver San Francisco	Ubisoft	HOL 10
EA Sports Active 2	EA Sports	11/10
Enclave: Shadows of Twilight	TopWare	2010
Epic Mickey	Disney	FALL 10
Family Feud Decades	Ubisoft	11/10
Family Party: Fitness Fun	D3Publisher	9/10
FlingSmash	Nintendo	HOL 10
Flip's Twisted World	Majesco	9/10
Ghost Recon: Future Soldier	Ubisoft	HOL 10
Gold's Gym Dance Workout	Ubisoft	8/10
GoldenEye 007	Activision	FALL 10
Gormiti: The Lords of Nature!	Konami	Q3 10
Grease: The Game	505	9/10
Greg Hastings Paintball 2	Majesco	9/10
The Grinder	TBA	TBA
Guilty Party	Disney	8/10
Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock	Activision	9/10
Gunblade NY and LA Machineguns Arcade Hits Pack	Sega	FALL 10
Hard Grip: The Climbing Game	TBA	TBA
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows—Part 1	Electronic Arts	FALL 10
Hasbro Family Game Night 3	Electronic Arts	10/10
Heathcliff: The Fast and the Furriest	Storm City	11/10
Hollywood Squares	Ubisoft	10/10
Honda Fever	Storm City	10/10
Ivy the Kiwi?	XSEED	8/10
Jeopardy!	THQ	FALL 10
Jewel Quest Trilogy	GameMill	10/10
Just Dance 2	Ubisoft	FALL 10
Kidz Bop Dance Party! The Video Game	D3Publisher	9/10
Kirby's Epic Yarn	Nintendo	FALL 10
Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole	Warner Bros.	9/10
The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword	Nintendo	2011
LEGO Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	LucasArts	Q4 10
Line Attack Heroes	Nintendo	TBA
Littlest Pet Shop 3 Biggest Stars	Electronic Arts	10/10
The Lord of the Rings: Aragorn's Quest	Warner Bros.	9/10
Lost in Shadow	Hudson	FALL 10
Man vs. Wild	Crave	11/10
Mario Sports Mix	Nintendo	2011
Megamind Bad. Blue.Brilliant	THQ	FALL 10
Metroid: Other M	Nintendo	8/10
Monopoly Streets	Electronic Arts	10/10
Monster Jam 2011	Activision	11/10
Mr. T	TBA	TBA
MySims SkyHeroes	Electronic Arts	9/10
NBA Jam	EA Sports	10/10
NCIS	Ubisoft	2011
New Carnival Games	2K Play	9/10
NHL 2K11	2K Sports	FALL 10
NHL Slapshot	EA Sports	9/10
Nickelodeon Fit	2K Play	11/10
Once Upon a Time	Storm City	9/10
Oops: Prank Party	Hudson	FALL 10
Pac-Man Party	Namco Bandai	FALL 10
Pheasants Forever: Wingshooter	GameMill	10/10
PokéPark Wii: Pikachu's Adventure	Nintendo	HOL 10
Pro Evolution Soccer 2011	Konami	FALL 10
Pyroblazer	TBA	TBA
Raving Rabbids Travel in Time	Ubisoft	HOL 10
Rock Band 3	MTV Games	HOL 10
Rock of the Dead	Conspiracy	10/10
Samurai Warriors 3	Nintendo	9/10
Scooby-Doo! and the Spooky Swamp	Warner Bros.	FALL 10
Sengoku Basara Samurai Heroes	Capcom	9/10
Sesame Street: Cookie's Counting Carnival	Warner Bros.	FALL 10
Sesame Street: Elmo's A-to-Zoo Adventure	Warner Bros.	FALL 10
Shaun White Skateboarding	Ubisoft	FALL 10
Sid Meier's Pirates!	2K	FALL 10
The Sims 3	Electronic Arts	10/10
Sky Pirates of Neo Terra	Aspyr	TBA
Sled Shred	SouthPeak	Q4 10
Sonic Colors	Sega	HOL 10
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions	Activision	9/10
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II	LucasArts	10/10
Stratusphere	TBA	TBA
Swords	Majesco	9/10
Tom Clancy's H.A.W.X. 2	Ubisoft	FALL 10
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Future Soldier	Ubisoft	3/11
TRON: Evolution—Battle Grids	Disney	HOL 10
Truth or Lies	THQ	FALL 10
Wheel of Fortune	THQ	FALL 10
Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?	Ubisoft	10/10
Wii Party	Nintendo	FALL 10
WWE All Stars	THQ	2011
WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2011	THQ	10/10
Zhu Zhu Pets: Wild Bunch	Activision	10/10
Zumba Fitness	Majesco	10/10
NINTENDO DS		
Alpha & Omega	Storm City	9/10
Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?	THQ	FALL 10
Bakugan Battle Brawlers: Defenders of the Core	Activision	10/10
Batman: The Brave and the Bold: The Videogame	Warner Bros.	9/10
Battle vs. Chess	SouthPeak	10/10
Ben 10 Ultimate Alien: Cosmic Destruction	D3Publisher	10/10
Beyblade: Metal Fusion	Hudson	FALL 10
Camaro Wild Ride	Storm City	11/10
Crafting Mama	Majesco	10/10
de Blob: The Underground	THQ	SPR 11
Disciples II	Strategy First	TBA
Disney Fairies: Tinker Bell and the Great Fairy Rescue	Disney	FALL 10
Doodle Hex	TBA	TBA
Dora the Explorer: Dora's Cooking Club	2K Play	11/10
Dragon Quest VI: Realms of Reverie	Square Enix	TBA
Duke Nukem Trilogy: Chain Reaction	Deep Silver	TBA
Duke Nukem Trilogy: Critical Mass	Deep Silver	TBA
Duke Nukem Trilogy: Proving Grounds	Deep Silver	TBA
Easy Piano	Valcon	2010
Etrian Odyssey III: The Drowned City	Atlus	FALL 10
Final Fantasy: The 4 Heroes of Light	Square Enix	10/10
Frantic Foto: Beastly	Storm City	Q1 11
Frantic Foto: Heathcliff Comic Edition	Storm City	10/10
Gabrielle's Ghostly Groove	Natsume	Q4 10
Ghost Trick: Phantom Detective	Capcom	FALL 10
Ghostwire: Link to the Paranormal	TBA	TBA
Go Diego Go Mega Bloks Build and Rescue	2K Play	11/10
Golden Sun: Dark Dawn	Nintendo	HOL 10
Gormiti: The Lords of Nature!	Konami	Q3 10
Grease	505	TBA
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows—Part 1	Electronic Arts	FALL 10
Hidden Mysteries: Salem Witches	GameMill	9/10
Honda Fever	Storm City	10/10
House, M.D.	Legacy	9/10
Ivy the Kiwi?	XSEED	8/10

RED TEXT = TITLES ADDED THIS MONTH. * TENTATIVE TITLE **NOTE:** RELEASE DATES OFTEN CHANGE.

Jeopardy!	THQ	FALL 10
Jewel Master: Cradle of Athena	Storm City	10/10
Kingdom Hearts Re:coded	Square Enix	TBA
Kung Zhu	Activision	10/10
Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole	Warner Bros.	9/10
LEGO Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	LucasArts	Q4 10
Littlest Pet Shop 3: Biggest Stars—Blue Team	Electronic Arts	FALL 10
Littlest Pet Shop 3: Biggest Stars—Pink Team	Electronic Arts	FALL 10
Littlest Pet Shop 3: Biggest Stars—Purple Team	Electronic Arts	FALL 10
The Lord of the Rings: Aragorn's Quest	Warner Bros.	9/10
Lufia: Curse of the Sinistrals	Natsume	Q3 10
Mario vs. Donkey Kong: Miniland Mayhem	Nintendo	HOL 10
Megamind Bad. Blue.Brilliant.	THQ	FALL 10
Monopoly Streets	Electronic Arts	10/10
Monster Jam 2011	Activision	11/10
Monster Tale	Majesco	12/10
My Baby 3	Majesco	10/10
MySims SkyHeroes	Electronic Arts	9/10
NCIS	Ubisoft	2011
New Carnival Games	2K Play	9/10
Okamiden	Capcom	2011
Pirate Battle	Orbital Media	TBA
Pokémon Black Version	Nintendo	SPR 11
Pokémon White Version	Nintendo	SPR 11
Pokémon Ranger: Guardian Signs	Nintendo	FALL 10
Professor Layton and the Unwound Future	Nintendo	9/10
Puzzle Overload	Telegames	Q4 10
Rock Band 3	MTV	10/10
Rune Factory 3: A Fantasy Harvest Moon	Natsume	FALL 10
Scooby Doo! and the Spooky Swamp	Warner Bros.	FALL 10
Scripps Spelling Bee	THQ	FALL 10
Sesame Street: Cookie's Counting Carnival	Warner Bros.	FALL 10
Sesame Street: Elmo's A-to-Zoo Adventure	Warner Bros.	FALL 10
The Sims 3	Electronic Arts	10/10
Solitaire Overload Plus	Telegames	Q3 10
Sonic Colors	Sega	FALL 10
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions	Activision	9/10
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II	LucasArts	10/10
Super Scribblenauts	Warner Bros.	FALL 10
Ultimate Brain Games	Telegames	Q4 10
Wheel of Fortune	THQ	FALL 10
Who Wants to Be a Millionaire	Ubisoft	10/10
Zhu Zhu Pets: Wild Bunch	Activision	10/10
NINTENDO 3DS		
Animal Crossing*	Nintendo	TBA
Asphalt GT	Gameloft	TBA
Assassin's Creed Lost Legacy	Ubisoft	TBA
Baseball*	Konami	TBA
Batman*	Warner Bros.	TBA
Battle of Giants: Dinosaur Strike	Ubisoft	TBA
BloodRayne: The Shroud	Majesco	TBA
Bokujyoumonogatari 3D*	Marvelous	TBA
Bomberman*	Hudson	TBA
A Boy and His Blob	Majesco	TBA
Carnival Games*	Take-Two	TBA
Chocobo Racing 3D*	Square Enix	TBA
Contra*	Konami	TBA
Crash-City GP	Rocket	TBA
cubic ninja	AQ	TBA
de Blob 2	THQ	TBA
Dead or Alive 3D*	Tecmo Koei	TBA
Deca Sports*	Hudson	TBA
DJ Hero 3D	Activision	TBA
Dragon Ball*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Dragon Quest*	Square Enix	TBA
Driver Renegade	Ubisoft	TBA
Dynasty Warriors*	Tecmo Koei	TBA
Etrian Odyssey*	Atlus	TBA
Face Racers: Photo Finish	Majesco	TBA
FIFA Soccer*	Electronic Arts	TBA
Final Fantasy*	Square Enix	TBA
Frogger*	Konami	TBA
Gundam*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Hollywood '61*	Ubisoft	TBA
Kid Icarus: Uprising	Nintendo	TBA
Kingdom Hearts 3DS*	Square Enix	TBA
Kororinpa*	Hudson	TBA
Kung Fu Panda Kaboom of Doom	THQ	TBA
The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D	Nintendo	TBA
LEGO*	Warner Bros.	TBA
Lion's Pride: Adventures in the Serengeti	Majesco	TBA
Lovely Lisa 3D	Tomy	TBA
Madden NFL*	Electronic Arts	TBA
Mario Kart*	Nintendo	TBA
Martha Stewart	Majesco	TBA
Marvel Super Hero Squad Infinity Gauntlet	THQ	TBA
Metal Gear Solid: Snake Eater 3D	Konami	TBA
Naruto Shippuden Action	Tomy	TBA
Ninja Gaiden*	Tecmo Koei	TBA
Nintendogs + Cats	Nintendo	TBA
Pac-Man & Galaga*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Paper Mario*	Nintendo	TBA
The Penguins of Madagascar	THQ	TBA
PilotWings Resort	Nintendo	TBA
Pro Evolution Soccer*	Konami	TBA
Professor Layton and the Mask of Miracle*	Level-5	TBA
Puss N Boots	THQ	TBA
Resident Evil Revelations	Capcom	TBA
Ridge Racer*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Saints Row: Drive-By	THQ	TBA
Samurai Warriors 3D*	Tecmo Koei	TBA
Shin Megami Tensei*	Atlus	TBA
Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Survivor*	Atlus	TBA
Shin Megami Tensei: Persona*	Atlus	TBA
The Sims 3	Electronic Arts	TBA
Sonic*	Sega	TBA
Star Fox 64 3D	Nintendo	TBA
Steel Diver	Nintendo	TBA
Super Monkey Ball*	Sega	TBA
Super Robot*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Super Street Fighter IV 3D Edition*	Capcom	TBA
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Ubisoft	TBA
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory	Ubisoft	TBA
VS-robo	Rocket	TBA
WonderWorld Amusement Park	Majesco	TBA

FAMILY PLAYTIME

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The Music of Sonic 4

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REEL FISHING CHALLANGE II
ROBIN HOOD: THE RETURN OF RICHARD
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PUFFINS: LET'S FISH
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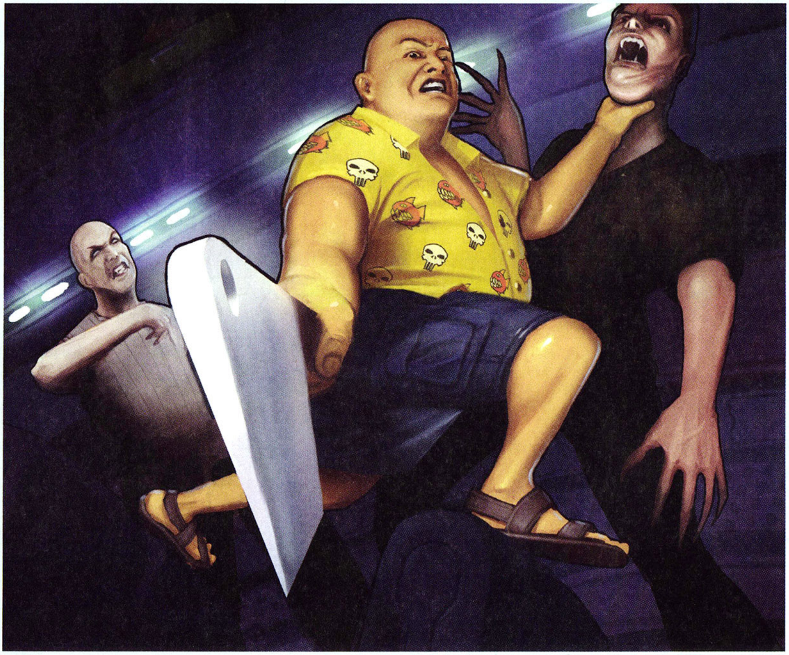
TELEGRAPH CROSSWORDS



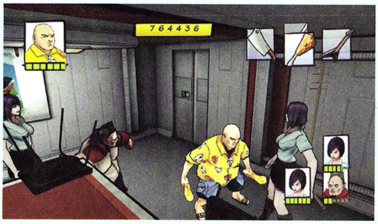
First-Class Ticket to Mayhem

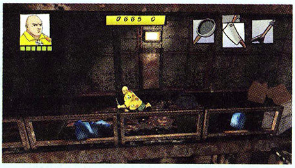
What happens when legions of vampires face off against one angry (and well-armed) food critic? Find out in Last Flight for WiiWare!

COMMON KNOWLEDGE TELLS us that when fighting vampires, it's advisable to bring along a stake, a cross, and maybe some garlic. Culinary critic Larry Adelman isn't gonna bother with all that. He's got knives, cleavers, mops, guitars, and more—and he's gonna use whatever it takes to hack, slash, and clobber the unliving daylights out of those bloodsucking freaks in upcoming WiiWare game Last Flight.

At its core, Last Flight (which will likely carry a Mature rating) is an action game inspired by vintage hack-and-slash arcade titles such as Golden Axe, as well as modern classics like Devil May Cry, Viewtiful Joe, and Bayonetta. But though those games served as influences, Last Flight looks like it will carve a niche all its own. For one thing, it boasts a unique setting: the entire game takes place on an airplane (hence the game's title). For another, it features a wicked sense of humor.

Case in point: protagonist Larry Adelman is anything but a typical game





[Left] Are our eyes deceiving us, or is Larry brandishing a pair of delicious drumsticks?

hero. He's overweight, he's bald, and he's not the most likeable guy around. "He's a [jerk]; no doubt about that," proclaims executive producer Marcin Kawa of publisher/developer Bloober Team. "If you ever met a guy who makes offensive jokes about you in front of your mates or tries to remind you of every stupid thing you've done in your life, then you know Larry. He also thinks that he's a womanizer and the best cook in the world. Frankly speaking, I don't remember the exact reasoning behind making him a food critic. We just had our 'Larry the cook' and everyone thought that was a cool character that can be fun to watch and control. I think that at some point we were just sick and tired of ideal *bishonens* and wanted to have a character that is more believable and not that perfect."

Despite his faults, Larry packs quite a punch. (Good thing, too, since he's pretty much humanity's last hope against the vampires.) While you move Larry with the Control Stick, you swing the Wii Remote and Nunchuk controllers to attack with his right and left hands, respectively. By chaining together a series of motions you'll be able to create combos, then cap them off with gruesome finishing moves (such as separating a vamp's head from his shoulders). Bloober Team promises loads of complex combo possibilities and numerous finishers, so while the game is easy to pick up and play, the action should have plenty of depth.

Although waging a life-or-death battle against a vampiric horde might sound like serious business, Bloober Team is aiming to keep things lighthearted through stylized, cartoony visuals. "When you're making a game, you can either go the hyperrealistic route or, as we did, try to use graphics to show that you're not that serious about this stuff," Kawa comments. "A photorealistic Last Flight would be way too serious to our tastes. We certainly didn't want to make a game where you can explore human (or vampire) anatomy in every detail. When you look at our game you can say that our goal was to entertain you. We're doing this in our own grotesque and twisted way, but it isn't about scaring people to death. We wanted to have this unique comic feeling that downplays violence and makes you feel positive about it."

The game also maintains its tone through numerous wry pop-culture references. "You'll find that kind of stuff through the game when talking to other characters, or certain locations will (hopefully!) remind you of some of your favorite movies or games," Kawa remarks, "or ones that you genuinely...dislike."

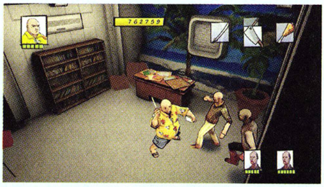
Kawa cites everything from Quentin Tarantino films to laughably bad B movies as influences on the game. As you might expect, the recent explosion in mass-media vampire popularity couldn't be ignored. "There's mainstream vampire stuff, and we wouldn't feel good without making some jokes about that. I mean, they're just asking for it."

Bloober Team is hoping to have development on Last Flight wrapped up this summer, but the game is only the first in a planned four-part episodic saga. The developers are planning to incorporate user feedback into subsequent chapters, and perhaps even add new elements such as co-op gameplay.

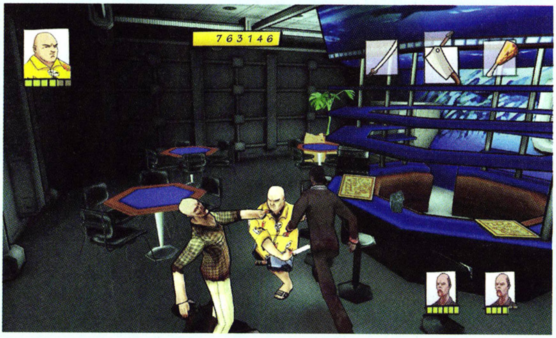
For now, however, the team's primary goal is to deliver a top-notch action title that appeals to hardcore players, and to do it in a way that's unlike any other game that's currently available.

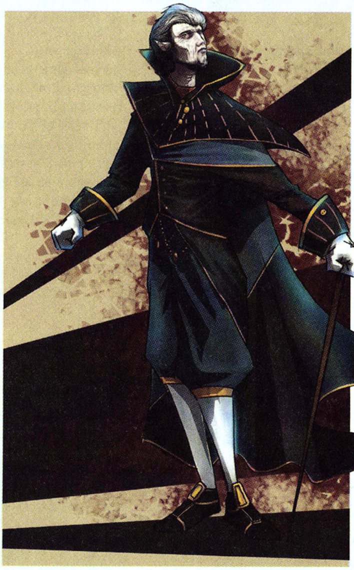
"Our goal was to make a game that the older part of Wii owners would like to play," explains Kawa. "Is it risky? Of course it is, but we gladly take that risk. As you might have noticed, Last Flight isn't a 'serious action-adventure game' with a troubled character on his quest to redemption. It's a parody laughing at all those games.... It's a game that makes fun of all this nonsense found in other so-called serious games. You won't find anything like that on WiiWare or other consoles."

—CHRIS H.



Talk about first-class! This is one spacious airplane.





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SONIC
×002

Playing the Blues

Composer Jun Senoue finds an old-school groove for Sonic the Hedgehog 4.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 4, coming to WiiWare this fall, is the true successor to the Blue Blur's beloved side-scrollers on the Sega Genesis. The composer responsible for the game's soundtrack is Jun Senoue, who knows a thing or two about those 16-bit classics, having lent his talents to both Sonic the Hedgehog 3 and Sonic & Knuckles. Senoue recently stopped by the NP offices to chat about his involvement with this long-awaited retro revival. —**STEVE T.**

NINTENDO POWER What was your reaction when you first heard that Sonic the Hedgehog 4 was finally going to happen after more than 15 years?

JUN SENOUE Takashi Iizuka and I worked together at Sonic Team USA for a long time—from Sonic Adventure through NiGHTS: Journey of Dreams. Before that, the first Sonic game either of us ever worked on was Sonic the Hedgehog 3. So we first met...I think it was 17 years ago now. Anyway, he came to me one day out of the blue and told me that we were going to do a classic Sonic game again! At that moment, we didn't know yet if it was going to be called Sonic the Hedgehog 4. But from the very beginning, he wanted me to compose the music in the same style as the classic Genesis games. Both he and I were really excited about the project and had a lot of fun working on it.

How did you change or adapt your musical style for this return to the classic-style Sonic?

Due to the hardware limitations of the Genesis, we could only work with a certain number of notes and a certain number of sounds. Sonic the Hedgehog 4 is a game for current consoles, but I tried to compose the tracks the old-fashioned way. I went back to the basics. I didn't actually go back and use the old FM sound tapes, but I tried to compose with as few notes as I could. I went about it largely the same way I did with music for the Genesis.

Actually, I did try to dig up a development kit for the Genesis. But it requires an old Japanese PC from NEC—not a very common PC—and I couldn't find one of those. So all I could do was sample some sounds from the original Sonic.

What was your approach to creating the sound for the various zones in the game?

Splash Hill Zone is the first level in the game and it's very similar to the opening levels in the original Sonic the Hedgehog and Sonic 2. So I wanted the music to be similar; the key word was "fun." Likewise, the second level is a casino-themed world, so I tried to draw from Sonic 2's Casino Night Zone. And I think the special-stage music in Sonic the Hedgehog 4 will remind you of the original game's special stage. I tried to compose the songs with a similar beat or similar tempo to the first two games in the series. I want players to get the same kind of impression.

Do you have a favorite track that you've composed for the game?

I'd say the opening level of Splash Hill Zone. When I saw the game for the very first time, that track just came to me immediately. [Sonic Team director Toshiyuki] Nagahara really dislikes that song, though. He wanted me to compose a new one, but it was important to me, so I didn't change it. [Laughs] I also really like the music for the first level in Mad Gear Zone.

Since Sonic the Hedgehog 3 was the first game in the franchise that you worked on, does it feel like things have sort of come full circle now with Sonic 4?

Absolutely. There are people I work with now who played Sonic 3 when they were very young children! That's pretty amazing to me.

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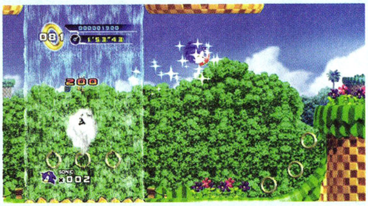
0'56"42
SONIC
×002

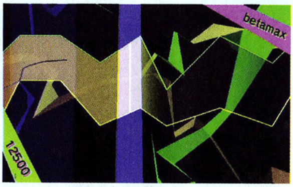
[Below] The Splash Hill Zone looks like a classic Sonic stage, and it should sound like one, too.



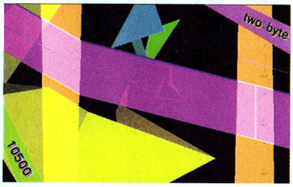
A Collision of Speed and Sound

Racing meets rhythm in Lilt Line for WiiWare.

TAPPING A BUTTON to a beat is fairly easy. Doing it while using motion control to steer your way through a twisting, turning, often-narrow passage—that's something else. But that's what you get to do in Lilt Line, the latest WiiWare title from Gaijin Games (based on an iPhone game by developer differentcloth). Though Lilt Line isn't part of Gaijin's popular Bit.Trip series, it shares the same unique, minimalist approach to gameplay, graphics, and controls. With dubstep (a type of electronic dance music) bass beats pounding in the background, you'll hold the Wii Remote controller sideways and tilt it back or forward to move your line up or down to navigate the 2D tracks; as beat markers zoom past, you'll press the 2 Button to make the stark backgrounds explode with a flurry of color. Unlike in most games, in which you earn points for a good performance, in Lilt Line you start each of the 15 stages with the maximum possible score, losing points if you hit the walls or miss a beat—lose all your points, and the game is over. And don't be surprised when that happens; though the game's concept is simple, it demands precise movements and lightning-quick reflexes as your line's speed increases and the challenge ramps up. Gaijin Games hopes to have the title finished later this summer. **—CHRIS H.**



See the thin line? That's what you control. See the rest? That's just pure craziness.



EVALUATION STATION

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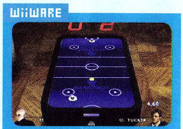
VIRTUAL CONSOLE
DSiWARE

WiiWARE



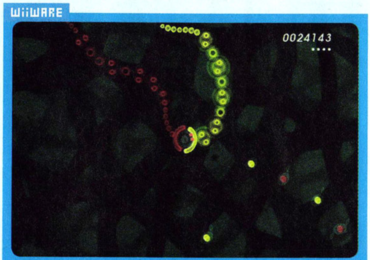
ARCADE SPORTS

PUBLISHER: **ICON GAMES ENTERTAINMENT**
GENRE: **SPORTS**
Wii POINTS: **800**

Arcade Sports is a demonstration in mixed results. The included games cover classic bowling-alley pastimes: air hockey, bowling, and multiple flavors of pool and snooker. An uncommonly good 3-D engine and impressive feature set—including multiple play modes, numerous customization options, and multiplayer—deliver high value. Unfortunately, the controls for bowling and air hockey need work, though the pool/snooker controls are commendable. **—PATRICK C.**

Hmmm...

WiiWARE



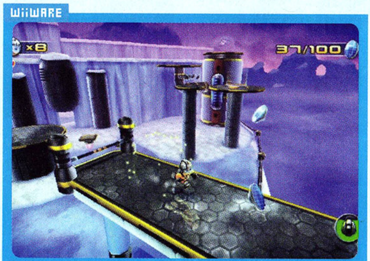
ART STYLE: ROTOZOA

PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO** GENRE: **ACTION** Wii POINTS: **600**

One of the hallmarks of the excellent Art Style series is simple gameplay executed perfectly. Rotozoa continues that tradition, but can be a tad awkward at the start. Holding the Wii Remote sideways, you move your round Rotozoan with the Control Pad and rotate it with the 1 and 2 Buttons. The coordination takes some getting used to as you attempt to capture color-matching Goobugs with the yellow and red strands that grow from your little creature. The strands get longer by one notch with every match, making it increasingly tricky to avoid costly wrong-color collisions, but when it all clicks and your Rotozoan is swimming through the ooze with the grace of an octopus, it's exhilarating. **—GEORGE S.**

Recommended

WiiWARE



JETT ROCKET

PUBLISHER: **SHIN'EN** GENRE: **PLATFORMER** Wii POINTS: **1,000**

Mario's not gonna need to start looking for a new job or anything, but Jett Rocket is an incredibly solid platformer. The controls are great, and there are plentiful extra touches (such as vehicles and minor puzzle elements) that take this beyond a simple run-and-jump affair. The graphics are really impressive as well; everything is high-res and silky-smooth, without ever a drop in frame rate. The levels are often sparsely populated, but this still looks better than a lot of full-priced retail Wii games. The camera could use some work, though, and while the difficulty is usually fair, losing a life means restarting the entire level—there are no checkpoints. Nonetheless, if you're a platformer fan you'd be crazy to pass this up. **—CHRIS H.**

Recommended

WiiWARE

LEAD THE MEERKATS

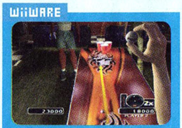
PUBLISHER: **LAPLAND STUDIOS**
GENRE: **SIMULATION**
Wii POINTS: **1,000**

Lead the Meerkats invites gamers to experience the hyperactive thrill of ruling a pack of meerkats. Players, as clan matriarchs, burrow fresh territory, ensnare mates, forage for food, churn out endless hordes of pups, and defend their growing empire against predators and rival meerkats. The concept is awesome, but the execution doesn't quite deliver; the controls are unnecessarily complicated and activities that sound great prove tedious during play. **—PATRICK C.**

Hmmm...

EVALUATION STATION

WIIWARE



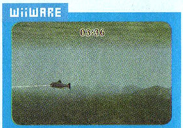
PONG TOSS PRO—FRAT PARTY GAMES

PUBLISHER: **JV GAMES**
GENRE: **SPORTS**
Wii POINTS: **600**

Every now and then a game comes along that's so ill-conceived it inspires awe. To be sure, the real-life game on which Pong Toss Pro is based is interminable at best, but JV Games's translation, incredibly, makes it worse by employing awful visuals, grating voiceovers, tedious gameplay, and shoddy controls while obscuring the game's alcoholic premise. Even if you love tossing balls at cups in real life, there's nothing to love here. —PATRICK C.

Grumble Grumble

WIIWARE



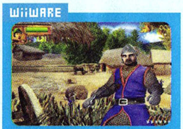
REEL FISHING CHALLANGE II

PUBLISHER: **NATSUME**
GENRE: **SPORTS**
Wii POINTS: **500**

Fishing is a multifarious experience; it's about location and atmosphere as much as it is fish. Unfortunately, Reel Fishing Challenge II ignores this fact. Players do their angling (attempting to complete prescribed missions) staring dumbly at a half-animated, looped background video—all awash in looped elevator music. The rudimentary Wii Remote fishing mechanics quickly become superfluous, because the experience on offer is awful. —PATRICK C.

Grumble Grumble

WIIWARE



ROBIN HOOD: THE RETURN OF RICHARD

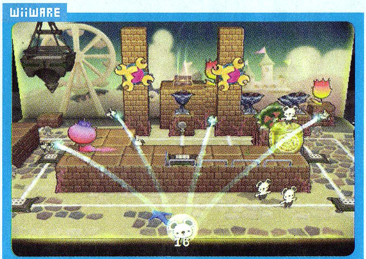
PUBLISHER: **CORESOFT**
GENRE: **SHOOTER**
Wii POINTS: **1,000**

Robin Hood: The Return of Richard is a game your great-grandpa would have loved; incredibly, it's a straight-up shooting gallery. Play consists solely of shooting bad guys as they wander back and forth in front of you. (Things really heat up every eight arrows, at which point you'll have to reload.) Given the price tag, it's clear that Nordcurrent has something in common with the Sheriff of Nottingham.

—PATRICK C.

Grumble Grumble

WIIWARE



THE TALES OF BEARSWORTH MANOR: PUZZLING PAGES

PUBLISHER: **SQUARE ENIX** GENRE: **PUZZLE** Wii POINTS: **1,000**

If nothing else, The Tales of Bearsworth Manor: Puzzling Pages will give you ample practice in flicking the Wii Remote controller. The entire game is based on this action, as you flick paper koala bears onto the play field so they can grab red pieces of candy for you. Flick too hard or too soft, and the bears will miss their targets. Thankfully, they are drawn to nearby sweets, so you don't have to be exactly precise. Getting the bears into a general area isn't always easy, though; you must figure out how to use items and angle your throws just so in order to obtain some particularly hard-to-reach confections. This can make the game frustrating, but it's still fun on the whole. —JUSTIN C.

Recommended

WIIWARE

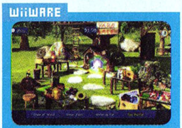
THE TALES OF BEARSWORTH MANOR: CHAOTIC CONFLICTS

PUBLISHER: **SQUARE ENIX**
GENRE: **STRATEGY**
Wii POINTS: **1,000**

I like the Tim Burtonesque style, but I found Chaotic Conflicts to be much more aggravating than its sibling, Puzzling Pages. Sure, it features the same basic gameplay mechanic—flick the Wii Remote to toss paper koalas onto the field—but Chaotic Conflicts has you defending blue jewels against waves of enemies. Playing a tower-defense title with imprecise controls can be pretty darn frustrating. —JUSTIN C.

Hmmm...

WIIWARE



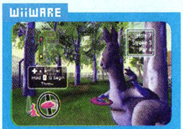
YARD SALE HIDDEN TREASURES: SUNNYVILLE

PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
Wii POINTS: **500**

Despite the inclusion of story elements and between-stage craft-making minigames, Yard Sale Hidden Treasures: Sunnyville is little more than a typical hidden-object game. Unlike some games of this type, the visuals are sharp and easy to read, but the controls for adjusting the zoomed-in view are nonintuitive. There's no reason you shouldn't be able to move the camera with the Control Pad. —CHRIS H.

Hmmm...

WIIWARE



ZOO DISC GOLF

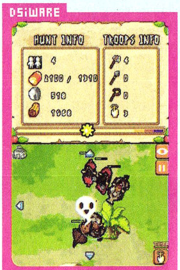
PUBLISHER: **SONALYSTS**
GENRE: **SPORTS**
Wii POINTS: **1,000**

The animals in this zoo are the disc-golf participants, leaving you to play as a panda, a kangaroo, a puffin, etc. in a lifeless course that approximates a natural setting—surrounded by a chain-link fence, of course. The motion-based control is wobbly, making it next to impossible to execute throws. You can choose handedness for the controls, but all of the animals throw right-handed and the option has little impact on shot accuracy, which is dismal.

—GEORGE S.

Grumble Grumble

DSiWARE



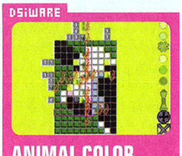
ANCIENT TRIBE

PUBLISHER: **CIRCLE ENTERTAINMENT**
GENRE: **STRATEGY**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

Ancient Tribe offers casual real-time strategy. The goals are typical—acquire resources, build units, research upgrades—but the action is streamlined; players command a handful of units to gather resources (and attack beasts to level up). It's simple fun, but one-dimensional. —PATRICK C.

Hmmm...

DSiWARE



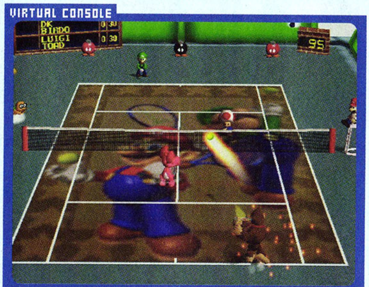
ANIMAL COLOR CROSS

PUBLISHER: **LITTLE WORLDS STUDIO**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

Animal Color Cross is essentially a color variation of picross. With the addition of color come a lot more numerical clues to comprehend and, often, a lot more challenge. That'd be fine, but the difficulty is wildly uneven and the harder puzzles feel like guessing games (luckily, the penalty for guessing is minimal). If you've already beaten Picross 3D and are itching for more, this should be up your alley, but it's not without its faults. —CHRIS H.

Hmmm...

VIRTUAL CONSOLE



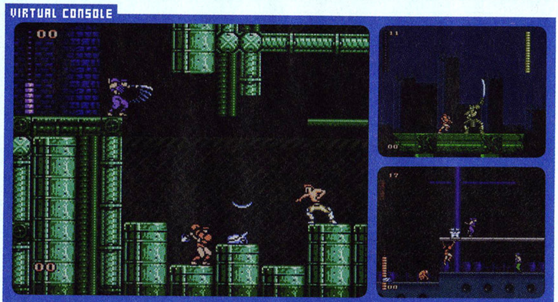
MARIO TENNIS

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO 64** PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
GENRE: **SPORTS** ORIGINAL RELEASE: **2000**

Thanks to Wii Sports Tennis, all console tennis games these days are bound to be motion-controlled. But in 2000, Mario Tennis made its own control advances with its use of the analog Control Stick. The game was a beacon for great control and smooth animation. The collection of 16 Mushroom Kingdom stars who take to the court for singles or doubles play include speedy Yoshi, powerful Bowser, and technique-driven Waluigi (who debuted with this title). Modes with rings, power-ups, and other bells and whistles add depth, but the main draw is well-executed no-nonsense tennis for up to four players. —GEORGE S.

Recommended

VIRTUAL CONSOLE



SHADOW OF THE NINJA

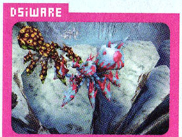
PLATFORM: **NES** PUBLISHER: **NATSUME** GENRE: **ACTION** ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1990**

Chris H's Pick

Shadow of the Ninja is one of the true overlooked gems of the NES era. It may not have the name recognition of its contemporaries, but it's got it where it counts: fast-paced action, excellent level design, rewarding enemy placement, and satisfying play mechanics such as climbing on the ceiling. The graphics were some of the best on the system when the game originally came out, and the sound effects are also top-notch. Plus, it's hard to go wrong playing as a butt-kicking ninja that can single-handedly take down a screen-filling battle tank. On the downside, the control is a little loose, and though the two-player co-op mode is a nice inclusion, it's plagued with slowdown and flicker. But don't let that stop you from giving this a try. Shadow of the Ninja is not to be missed.

Recommended

DSiWARE



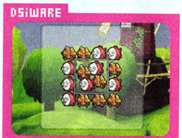
BATTLE OF GIANTS: MUTANT INSECTS —REVENGE

PUBLISHER: **UBISOFT**
GENRE: **ACTION**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **800**

Ubisoft's latest invites players to wander a post-apocalyptic wasteland as…a giant spider. (We'll just ignore the fact that spiders aren't insects.) Levels consist of crawling from point A to point B collecting loot and dueling enemy "insects." Loot is spent on upgrading and customizing your arachnid between levels. While the game's polish is commendable, the battle system grows repetitive far too quickly. —PATRICK C.

Hmmm…

DSiWARE



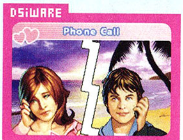
BRAIN DRAIN

PUBLISHER: **ENJOY GAMING**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

A faithful translation of the underwhelming WiiWare version, this trifle of a puzzle game won't drain your brain as much as provide moderate amusement as you rearrange animal icons into set patterns. The task is accomplished by grouping icons in blocks of four and rotating them—a moderate challenge for a puzzle novice. Although the layout is a tad cluttered in the WiiWare version, the DSiWare version solves that by artfully spreading the interface over both screens. —GEORGE S.

Grumble Grumble

DSiWARE



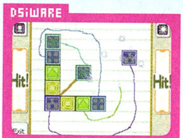
DATE OR DITCH

PUBLISHER: **GAMELOFT**
GENRE: **SIMULATION**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

This is yet another in Gameloft's long line of dating sims. It shares the same attractive (though rapidly growing repetitive) graphic style and "win over the cute girl or guy" goals of its predecessors, but it lacks the variety that made those other titles enjoyable. The gameplay is reduced to choosing options from dialogue trees, and the correct answers are usually screamingly obvious. With minimal challenge and no replay value, we'll go with "ditch" on this one. —PHIL T.

Grumble Grumble

DSiWARE



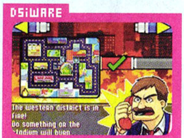
DON'T CROSS THE LINE

PUBLISHER: **AKSYS GAMES**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **200**

Don't Cross the Line is a puzzle game in which you draw lines to connect boxes without letting the lines touch. The presentation is bare-bones, but it's a decent brain-teaser for a low price. The problem is that in a lot of the levels success isn't determined by how clever you are; it's determined by how many lines you can draw within a tight area. As a result, the game isn't as satisfying as it could be. —CHRIS H.

Hmmm…

DSiWARE


The western district is in fire!
Do something or the stadium will burn

FIRE PANIC

PUBLISHER: **PLAYTAINMENT**
GENRE: **ACTION**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **200**

There's not much to Fire Panic. You draw routes so your two fire trucks can drive to fires and automatically put them out and… that's pretty much it. There are only two stages (an easy stage and a hard stage), and other than replenishing your water supply and collecting the occasional bonus item by driving past it, your goal is simply to amass as many points as possible before the city inevitably goes up in flames. Even for 200 points, this feels shallow. —CHRIS H.

Grumble Grumble

EVALUATION STATION

WiiWARE
VIRTUAL CONSOLE
DSiWARE

DSiWARE

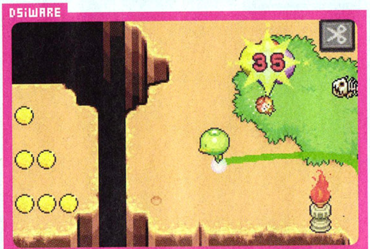
FLAME TAIL

PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

Flametail, which is an enhanced version of one of the minigames in the WiiWare title Maboshi's Arcade, plays like an update of that classic Snake game. You know the one—move around the screen, eat things, and don't touch your tail. That Snake. This time, however, scrolling levels, expanded goals, and power-up items give the once-simple gameplay lots more depth and plenty of challenge. It puts an interesting twist on a tired old formula. **—PHIL T.**

Recommended

DSiWARE



A KAPPA'S TRAIL

PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO** GENRE: **ACTION** NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

In A Kappa's Trail, you guide a water spirit along a winding road by drawing a path for him to follow with the DS's stylus. Despite the game's cutesy appearance, it's actually quite challenging. From the start, you're faced with moving platforms, darkened levels, and a creepy hand that immediately ends the game if it catches you. You'll also have to adjust to using the stylus to not only draw a path, but move the camera as well. Given how frequently you must adjust the view, Control Pad camera controls would have resulted in a lot fewer accidental missteps. Despite this minor flaw, A Kappa's Trail is a surprisingly full-featured game, especially considering its low price. The great gameplay, satisfying challenge, and loads of unlockables make this a worthy purchase. **—PHIL T.**

Recommended

DSiWARE

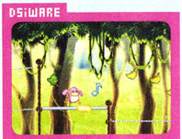
LEGENDARY WARS: T-REX RUMBLE

PUBLISHER: **INTERPLAY**
GENRE: **STRATEGY**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **800**

At first glance, Legendary Wars suggests crazy value—an RTS of game-card depth for a pittance. Players control loveable primitives as they multiply, forage, and battle an assortment of prehistoric critters. Unfortunately, the slickness and high concept can't survive woefully cumbersome play mechanics, including obscured views, indistinguishable units, poor group-selection, zany pathfinding, frustrating AI, and slow map navigation. **—PATRICK C.**

Hmmm...

DSiWARE



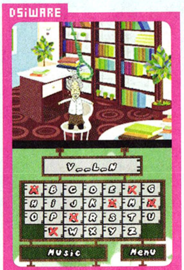
MAESTRO! GREEN GROOVE

PUBLISHER: **NEMO ENTERTAINMENT**
GENRE: **PLATFORMER**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

Maestro! Green Groove is a platformer in which the main character walks along a guitar string. The simple controls have you strumming the string to make feathered protagonist Presto jump up or down a level. It sounds easy, but the challenge ramps up quickly, with fruit to collect, enemies to attack, and timed notes to hit. The solid play mechanics, classical soundtrack, and fun boss fights will keep you coming back for more. **—PHIL T.**

Recommended

DSiWARE



MEGA WORDS

PUBLISHER: **DIGITAL LEISURE**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

"Mega" in name only, Mega Words offers three basic word games—scramble, anagrams, and hangman—in an appallingly spartan package. Even if your love of words excuses the dreary presentation, one thing is unforgivable: if you lose at hangman, you aren't given the answer. **—PATRICK C.**

Grumble Grumble

DSiWARE

PUFFINS: LET'S FISH

PUBLISHER: **OTHER OCEAN**
GENRE: **ACTION**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

More game engine than game, Puffins: Let's Fish is as basic as it gets; players control a puffin as it navigates an underwater maze, gobbling up fish. Naturally, a few predators provide the requisite challenge. Two modes offer mild variations on the concept: Dive Fishing mode, incredibly, is a straight-up Pac-Mac clone, while Quick Catch offers free-roam fish pursuit with a time constraint. Either choice will leave you awash in tears long before your puffin is sated. **—PATRICK C.**

Grumble Grumble

DSiWARE

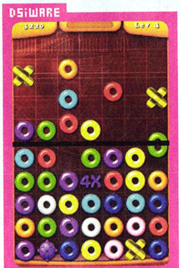
SPIN SIX

PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

Spin Six is a new version of Nonono Puzzle Chai-Rian, a GBA game that Nintendo released in Japan back in 2005. The circle-swapping gameplay is similar to Puzzle League, except that instead of linking colors, you must line up number chains. Like Puzzle League, the basics are simple, but great skill and reflexes are required to pull off massive combos. The wide variety of game modes keeps the addictive action fresh while helping you master different aspects of gameplay. **—PHIL T.**

Recommended

DSiWARE



SUPER SWAP

PUBLISHER: **TEYON**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

Super Swap is a Bejeweled clone, and not a very good one at that. The dull presentation brings to mind a cheap Flash game, the stylus controls aren't terribly responsive, and three of the game's four modes are virtually identical. There are far better DSiWare puzzle games. **—PHIL T.**

Hmmm...

DSiWARE

Telegraph CROSSWORDS
ACROSS
Nautical.
DOWN
Expression.
PUZZLE 001
00:02:01

TELEGRAPH CROSSWORDS

PUBLISHER: **SANUK GAMES**
GENRE: **PUZZLE**
NINTENDO DSi POINTS: **500**

Intuitive controls and a letter-by-letter tip feature make this 500-puzzle collection accessible, but the clues (often one word) may leave you scratching your head. Also, the British (London Telegraph) puzzles don't appear to be Americanized. **—GEORGE S.**

Hmmm...

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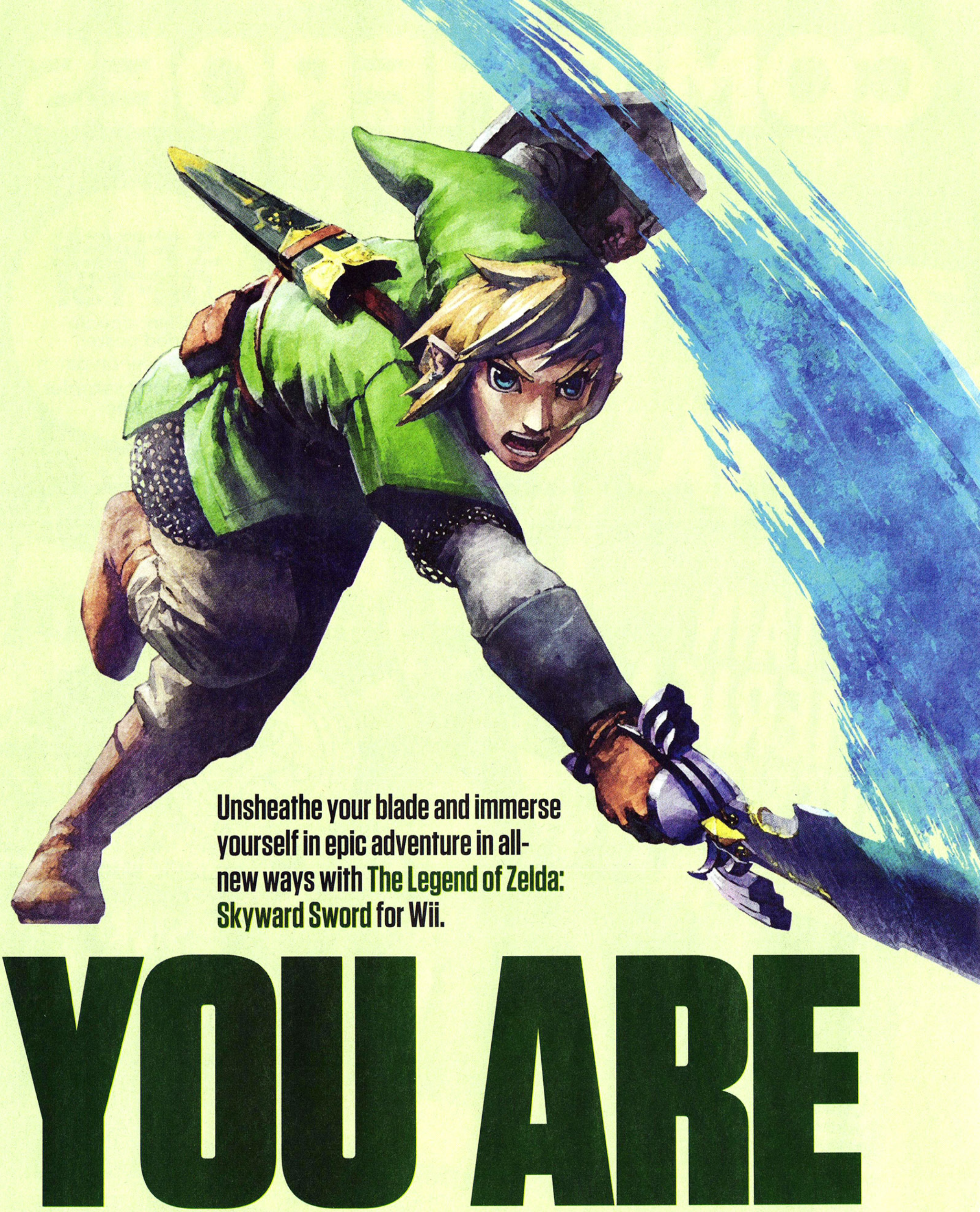
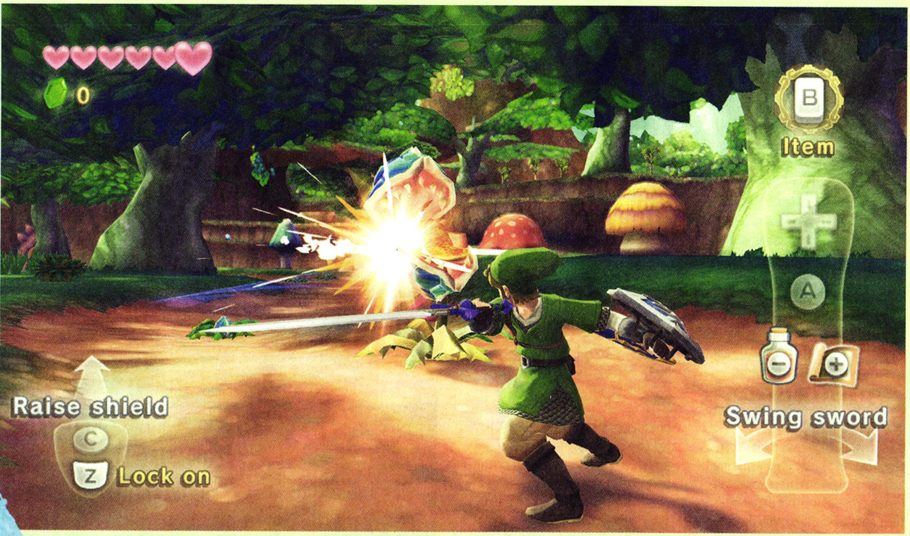


Unsheathe your blade and immerse yourself in epic adventure in all-new ways with The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword for Wii.

YOU ARE

BY **CHRIS HOFFMAN**

PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO** DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO** RELEASE: **2011** **Wii**



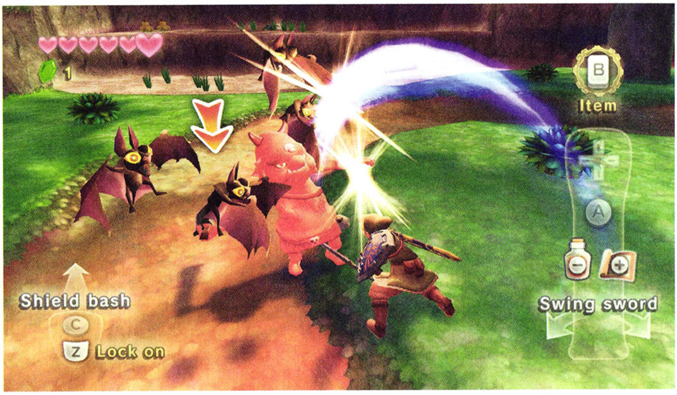
You think you know what to expect from the Legend of Zelda series: exploring dungeons, fighting monsters, solving puzzles, and using an assortment of items as you embark on an epic fantasy journey to save the land from evil. In the latest installment of the beloved series, The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword, that's all still true. But thanks to the Wii MotionPlus accessory and the advances in movement-based gameplay that have occurred since the 2006 release of The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess, Skyward Sword makes those tried-and-true ideas new again. In Skyward Sword, you get to live the legend like never before.

LE GEND

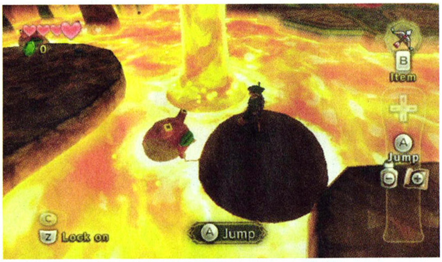
The biggest enhancement to the Zelda formula is complete control over heroic Link's swordplay, achieved through the required use of Wii MotionPlus. You don't just wildly waggle the Wii Remote controller to attack; if you swing from left to right, Link will swing left to right, and if you swing up and down, Link will respond with a vertical slice. Likewise, you can swing diagonally or thrust forward, and Link will replicate the same motions in-game. (Yes, Link is once again right-handed.) If you swing both the Wii Remote and Nunchuk, you'll unleash Link's trademark spin attack, and if you hold the sword over your head, you'll charge up energy and be able to fire a beam from your sword (reminiscent of Link's ranged sword-firing attacks from some of the classic Zelda games).

And while having complete control over your blade is cool, it's not just for show; you'll have to use different types of attacks depending on the enemies you face. You'll slay man-eating Deku Baba plants by swinging horizontally or vertically (depending on which way they open their mouths), and enemy grunts who often hold their weapons in certain positions require you to swing in specific directions to find an opening in their defenses and land a hit. A powerful skeleton boss, for example, continually changes the way it brandishes its swords, so you'll have to keep changing the way you attack; if it holds one blade horizontally guarding its skull, and holds the other vertically to protect its right side, you'll have to use a blow that hits it from the left. A giant scorpion requires a similar strategy; you must angle your attacks perpendicular to its pincers, or your strikes will bounce off the claw's hard shell.

Your shield, meanwhile, is controlled with the Nunchuk. When you raise the Nunchuk, Link raises his shield in kind, and if you thrust the Nunchuk forward while the shield is



[Below] This image taken from the official trailer shows Link's journey to a treacherous dungeon early in the game. Note that he's traversing the lava by balancing on a rolling boulder. Now *that* takes talent!



raised, you'll bash foes or knock back enemy projectiles.

A HERO IN ACTION

Although swordplay is receiving a big emphasis in Skyward Sword, it's but one ingredient in the Zelda recipe. Naturally, there's plenty of exploration, too. The area we were able to investigate was a lush forest filled with colorful mushrooms, towering green trees, and radiant beams of light that punctured the leafy canopy. The nonlinear environment was a virtual Zelda playground, with points of interest beckoning in every direction, from passages you could crawl through to vines you could climb to ropes you could swing from.

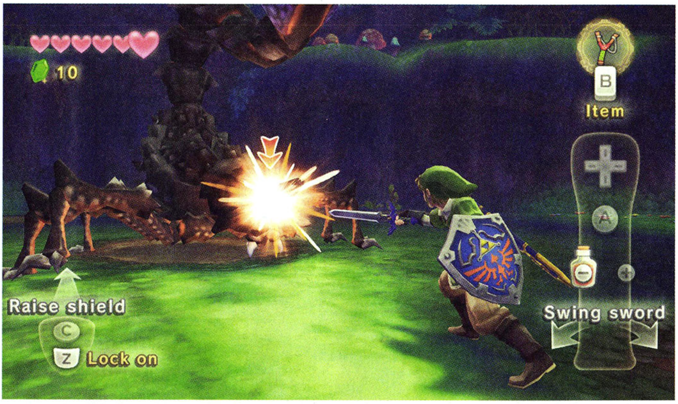
You move Link via traditional means—by using the analog Control Stick on the Nunchuk controller—but a new stamina meter delivers a fresh twist. By holding the A Button you can make Link dash for a limited time, which not only lets him move faster, but also enables him to negotiate steep inclines and even run a short distance straight up walls—great for getting onto ledges to grab a few extra Rupees.

Though there weren't many puzzles in the work-in-progress version of the game, one door was protected by an eyeball-shaped mechanism; the eye followed the point of Link's sword, and the only way to get through the door was to move your blade around to make the eye dizzy, after which you could attack it to unlock the door.

THROW IT, SWING IT, LAUNCH IT

As you explore, you'll have ample opportunity to delve into Link's famous bag of items. Like the sword, most of the items feature intuitive, more-realistic, gesture-based controls. When using the bow and arrows, you aim with the Wii Remote, pull back on the Nunchuk to ready the weapon, then press and release the C Button to fire; it's a lot like firing a bow in Wii Sports Resort Archery. The slingshot works in a similar but simpler fashion—you just point and shoot.

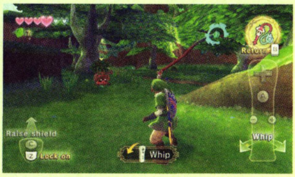
Bombs have received a control upgrade, too. By pressing the A Button you'll drop a bomb at your feet, or you can make an overhand flicking motion to toss a bomb through the air. The best thing about the bombs, however, is the ability to roll them forward, bowling-style, with an underhand throwing motion.



HERO'S ARSENAL

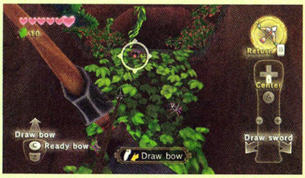
One of the most compelling aspects of The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword is the new approach to item use thanks to compatibility with the Wii MotionPlus accessory. Here's a brief look at the five currently revealed items.

WHIP



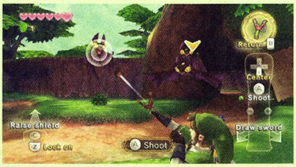
The whip isn't powerful enough to defeat large enemies, but it's great for smiting small foes or grabbing Rupees.

BOW



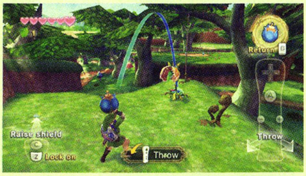
This classic weapon is made new again thanks to realistic controls. Aim at the screen, pull back on the Nunchuk, and let your arrows fly!

SLINGSHOT



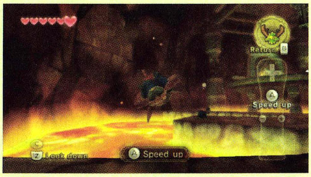
Not as involved as the bow, the slingshot lets you point and fire to rapidly blast bad guys with projectiles.

BOMBS

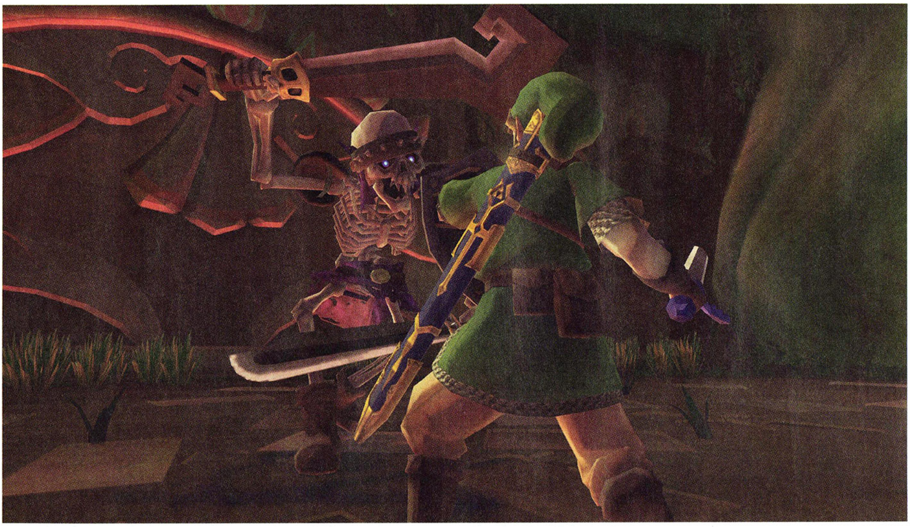


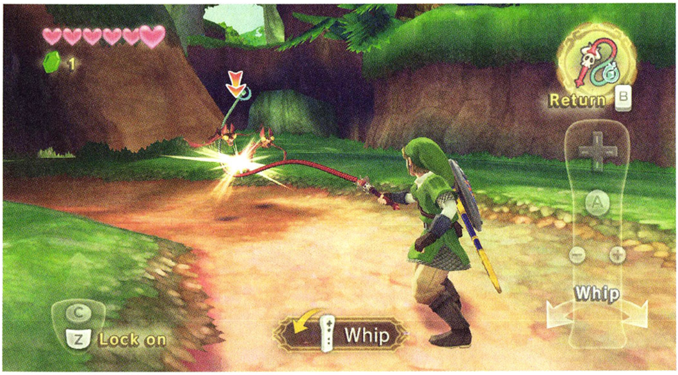
The coolest thing about the bombs is the ability to throw them or roll them by performing the real-life gesture with the Wii Remote.

BEETLE



This all-new item launches from Link's arm. It operates as an eye in the sky, plus it can grab out-of-reach objects and bombard enemies.





Aside from allowing you to position bombs in hard-to-reach areas, bomb rolling is just plain fun; after learning we could roll bombs, we never wanted to use them in any other way.

Other tools include a whip (which you can swing in any direction to grab objects or defeat smaller enemies, such as the batlike Keese) and an all-new insect-shaped device known as the Beetle. Launched from Link's wrist, the Beetle is a mechanical flying drone that's maneuvered simply by moving the remote in the desired direction; it can get to areas that are inaccessible by Link himself, and you can use it to scout areas or snag items (such as bombs) and then drop them on your foes. Unlike in past Zelda games, there's no pause in the action when you switch between tools or weapons; you press the B Button and select the desired item from a circular menu in real time. The action doesn't halt when you drink life-replenishing potions, either.

SKYWARD BOUND

The changes don't stop with the gameplay. The game features a unique story that delves into the origins of the Zelda mythos. The Skyward Sword incarnation of Link is a young man living in a land called Skyloft, a peaceful world that floats among the clouds. One day, however, an incident occurs that changes Link's life forever (the folks at Nintendo declined to go into specifics). After learning of the land below the clouds—a dangerous place ruled by evil—Link embarks on a journey that takes him from Skyloft to the lower world and back again. Nintendo has even shown video footage of Link diving off a cliff and into the clouds, and reps have proclaimed that moment to be very important to the game's story.

As you may recall, when the then-untitled Skyward Sword was announced last year, artwork was shown depicting Link with a sword-like female character. Nintendo has revealed that the character is the titular Skyward Sword, and that it becomes the legendary Master Sword during the course of the adventure.

To go along with the new directions in story and gameplay, Skyward Sword features a new impressionistic visual style. As you can tell by looking at the screens on these pages, the game seems to combine the realistic character proportions of Twilight Princess with the cartoony cel shading of The Wind Waker. The result is incredibly striking and beautiful in motion; it's what you might imagine Zelda games such as A Link to the Past or Minish Cap would look like if they were polygonally rendered, yet Skyward Sword delivers a distinct look that's not quite like anything else in the series.

Based on what we've played thus far, Skyward Sword appears to deliver the core Zelda experience you'd expect—a fantasy adventure of the highest caliber—but with enough changes to the controls, visuals, and story to provide a fresh experience for even the most hardened Zelda veteran. The only downside is that the game won't be out until some unspecified time in 2011, but as the saying goes, good things come to those who wait.

Sword Forger

Eiji Aonuma has been with Nintendo since 1988, and he's been an integral part of the Zelda series since 1998's The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time. Now the producer for The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword (as well as the Zelda franchise in general), Aonuma recently gave us the opportunity to sit down with him to gain additional insight into Link's latest groundbreaking epic.

NINTENDO POWER This sampling of Skyward Sword that we got to play—what does it represent? Is it an area from the final game or a test area or what?

EIJI AONUMA Well, in the demo what you're seeing is an area that will actually end up being divided more—and of course, you won't be able to proceed quite so easily through it—but it represents a very early stage where Link, for the first time, travels down to the realm below the clouds. That being said, the giant skeleton that you fight when you go inside the tree, and [the fight against] the giant scorpion, aren't in those locations within the game. We just put them there for the demo version.

Would this be considered a dungeon or a field in the final game?

It's the field.

You've mentioned trying to make the game structure different from past Zelda games. Could you elaborate more on how the title is structured?

You just asked me, "Does this represent a field or a dungeon?" That's really kind of the change that we're doing to the structure this time around. So traditionally, a dungeon would be a bunch of small rooms connected and you'd have to clear one to get to the next and to the next and then finally you get to the boss at the end.... However, this time around what we're trying to do is take maybe some of that dungeon structure and actually move it out of those small connected rooms and, say, into an area that might traditionally be considered a field. [We may] take some of the same elements—some challenges that allow you to progress through the field rather than it being an area of small connected rooms—and maybe there's a boss character at the end of that....

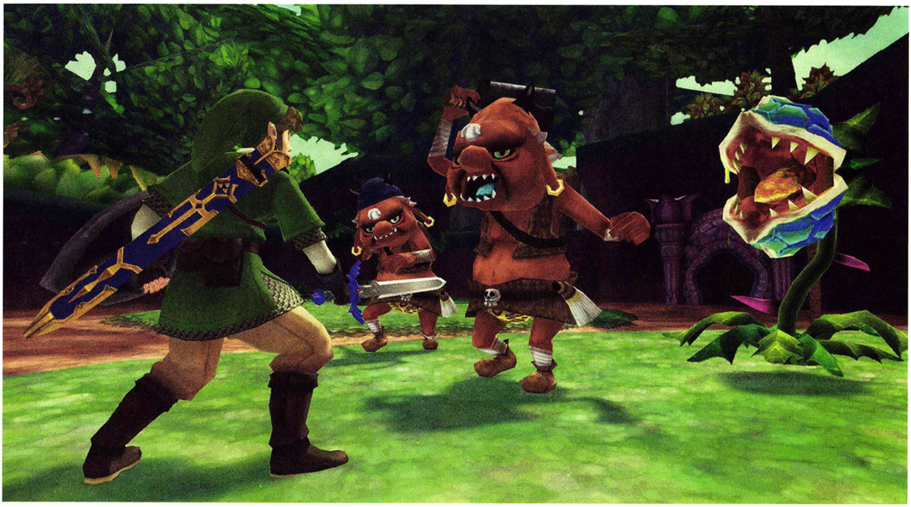
Traditionally a dungeon is a place where it's all about combat and going from room to room, again, defeating enemies to get to the end. Now, this time we're thinking about creating dungeons maybe where you don't have a sword and your goal is not to defeat them, but to circumvent them or run away from them to clear that particular dungeon, and that's one way the structure is different from other Zelda titles.

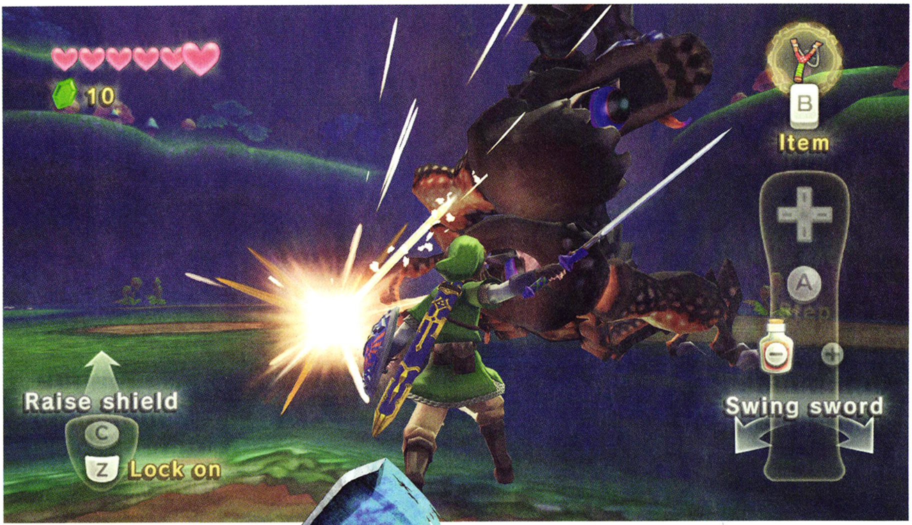
Is this graphical style sort of a happy medium between the visual styles of The Wind Waker and Twilight Princess?

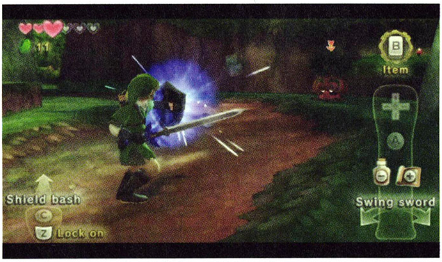
We didn't choose this art style for this game because we preferred one art style over another. Those art styles really didn't contribute to our choice of art styles this time around. The reason we have the art style that we do, and this is something that [Zelda creator] Mr. [Shigeru] Miyamoto talked about as well, is that we're focusing on swordplay. And to make the swordplay accessible and clear to the user, that has informed how we created the character designs and why we have some of the exaggerated features for the characters. Implementing those exaggerated features also impacts the visual design, because if we had too realistic of an art style then those exaggerations or deformations of the characters aren't appealing. So we chose an art style that works with that—the elements that are necessary to support the gameplay.

Were any other visual styles considered?

When we were looking at the basic gameplay, and we looked at what we needed to support that gameplay, the thing that we really focused on was that exaggeration of different features of different enemy designs. Really, this was the art style that we settled upon, so we really didn't try anything else and then toss those aside to use this one. I can say that, of course, the art style that we used to help highlight those character exaggerations did inform what we did with the rest of the scenery, so that is where we got sort of that watercolor, more impressionist style of art for all of the scenery and stuff you see—that all stems from the choices we made for the art style of the character design.







A well-timed shove of the Nunchuk allows you to deflect projectiles with your shield. That should teach this rock-spitting fiend some manners!

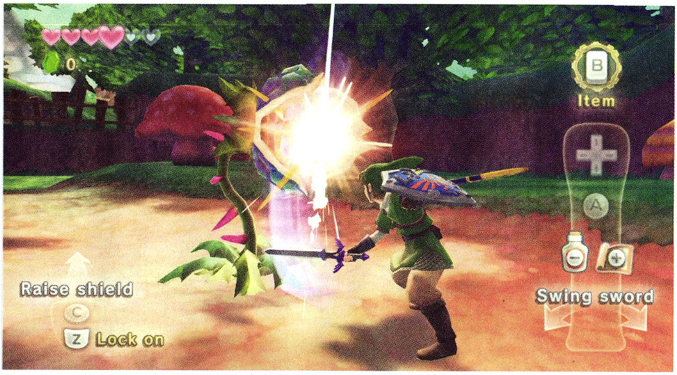
I really like the art style. It sort of reminds me of a polygonal version of Minish Cap.
[Laughs] Why was that?

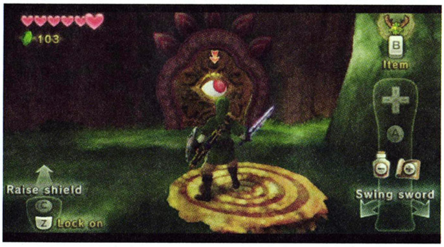
Certainly the colors. The big mushrooms as well.
For us, we chose to really give a clear representation of things. That was one of the reasons we chose this art style—so we could really define what [things] look like. And I think Minish Cap was probably developed with the same idea in mind, so there were probably some natural similarities.

The demo featured eight slots for items. Does that mean there will be only eight items in the game?
We don't really want to talk too much about the number of items. If you look at [using] the Wii MotionPlus accessory, the eight item slots is just a really good feel for item selection, so that's why that's there now. That's not to say that it wouldn't increase or that we might be able to fit something else in there that works just as well but has more items.

What is your favorite item to use so far?
Well, one of the items that I'm really fond of and is new this time around is the beetle—the flying insect that goes out. Right now all you've seen is using the beetle to retrieve items or to drop bombs, but there are lots of different ways to use the beetle. For example, one of the things we're looking at and thinking about is having the beetle be able to go out almost like a flying camera. It can go out and scout out larger areas [while you're in] a safe spot. You can look over places you might not want to travel to quite yet. I think we're going to be able to use what the beetle can do to help us solve puzzles, so the way we implement the inherent functionality of the beetle within the gameplay is something we're still looking at, but I think the possibilities are vast, and we're very excited about it. One of the things I think we might want to try is, of course, you know, we also have characters within the Legend of Zelda—Gorons and Zoras—so with some of the inhabitants of the world it'd be great to use maybe the beetle to do some of those events that you would normally do. You know, sometimes they'll challenge you to a race of some sort or something. Hopefully we'll be able to implement the beetle in some of the gameplay interactions with those races.

Speaking of puzzle design, there are new items, new combat, a new structure—will there be new approaches to the puzzles?
Absolutely. We're thinking of new types of puzzles. Not only new types of puzzles, but new ways to implement Wii MotionPlus that'll allow us to solve puzzles in ways we haven't done in the past. One thing also that I'd like to mention is that the sword itself has a treasure-seeking ability and so using the sword to seek out new treasures and hidden objects is something that we're going to do. I'd like people to look forward to imagining how we're going to use the sword to do that.





Along the same line, with so many things changing, should we still expect to see Princess Zelda and Ganon in the game?
Seeing that it is The Legend of Zelda, we can't have a game without Zelda! So I think it's safe to say we'll be seeing her. As to whether or not Ganon will be making an appearance, we don't want to make any comments on that as of yet.

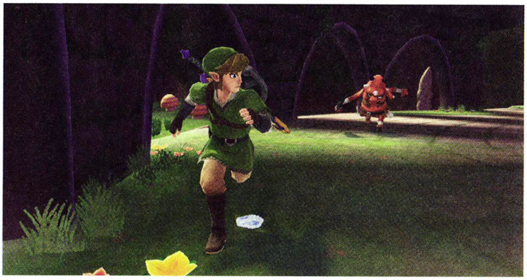
Does this game fit into the existing Zelda continuity, or is this a separate story?
I think we've talked with the media about this before, about Ocarina of Time being sort of the oldest story in the Zelda timeline, but, of course, in Ocarina of Time the Master Sword already exists, so it's obviously safe to say that this takes place before Ocarina of Time.

Have you given any thought to including voice acting in the Zelda series? If not for Link, then maybe for other characters?
Personally, I don't want to have Link speak in the game. We haven't had him talk at all up to this point. It's part of the series's history. It would just, to me, break the image of Link to have him speak. In terms of other characters, if Link never talks and everybody else in the game is chatting and whatnot I also think that's sort of an off mixture, so it's not something that, to be honest, I've really thought I want to be superactive about or I've really pressed for. It just hasn't come up to me personally.

Say, since the game is partially set in the sky, any chance Epona is a Pegasus?
[Laughs] I hadn't thought of that! You surprised me with that one! Of course, you know, Link does have to travel between Skyloft and the land below, and back and forth, so he's obviously going to have to do that via some sort of conveyance. That being said, I'd like to reveal that at a later time, so I don't want to give away too much other than to say that he is going to be traveling between the two. However, I can guarantee he's not going to be flying around like [Pit from] Kid Icarus!

What's something really cool in the Skyward Sword demo that the average player might not notice—something that's sort of a secret?
It's not something that's a secret, but I haven't seen many people do it when I've had the opportunity to watch people play, and that's the way that you can fight the Deku Baba plants that come out and try to grab you. They come out and you can see that they open this way [horizontally] or they open this way [vertically], and you have to swing your sword [in the corresponding direction], but another way to defeat them is to take your bombs and huck them at them, and the Deku Baba will actually grab the bomb out of the air or off the ground and hold it in its mouth, and then, of course, it explodes and you defeat them. I haven't really seen people doing that, and I think it's a fun way to play—another interesting way to defeat the enemies rather than just traditional swordplay.

Has the tea table been upended during development of this game?
Not yet! With that being said, Mr. Miyamoto has been pretty active in collaborating with us this time around. I mean, obviously he always is, but one of the things under his directive that he wanted to have for the E3 version was that if you charge your sword up and swing, you release those energy beams. That was something that Mr. Miyamoto definitely wanted to have in the E3 demo, and we really worked hard to get it ready and actually got it in. It's a new element that we were just able to implement before E3. Luckily for us, since Mr. Miyamoto is so involved in all of our discussions and whatnot, I don't think we're going to give him the opportunity to come in and upend the tea table this time, because he's not going to go and turn around on something that he's helping make! He's not going to be able to flip that over!



[Below] Don't worry; Link's not plummeting to his doom. In fact, this scene depicts one of the most pivotal moments in the game.

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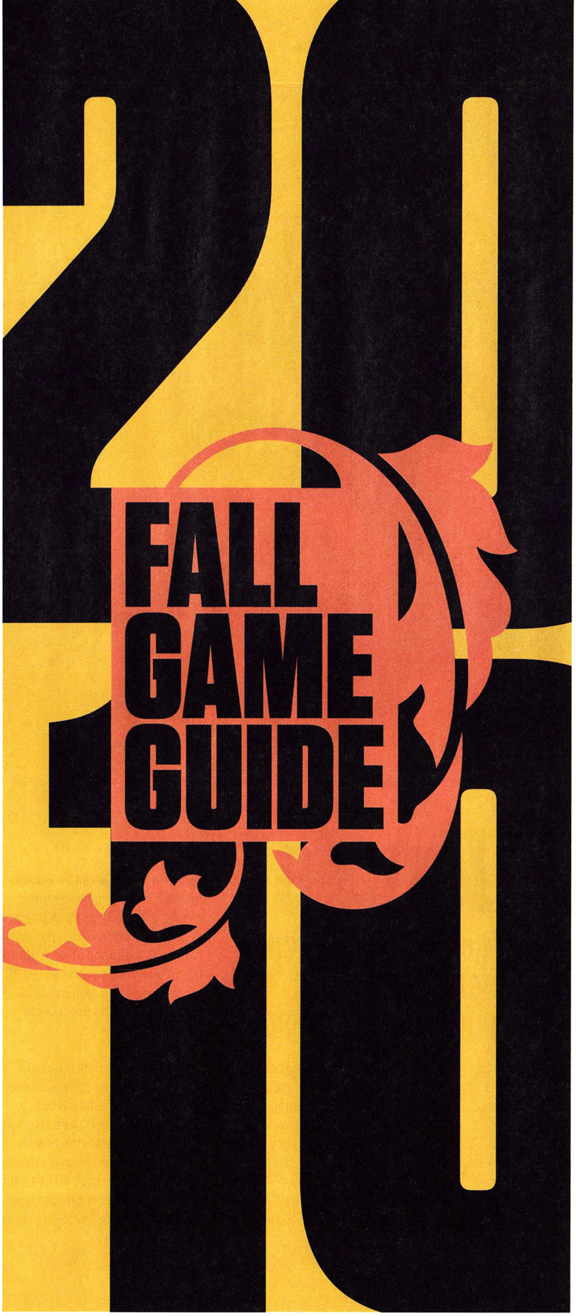

FALL GAME GUIDE

2010 HAS ALREADY been an impressive year for Nintendo fans. Games such as Super Mario Galaxy 2, Sin and Punishment: Star Successor, and Pokémon HeartGold and SoulSilver Versions have been nothing short of phenomenal. But if video game history has taught us anything, it's that most publishers save their best stuff for the latter half of the year, and 2010 looks like it'll continue that trend. On the following pages you'll bear witness to dozens of hits in the making, from franchise revitilizations like Donkey Kong Country Returns, Kirby's Epic Yarn, and GoldenEye 007 to fascinating new properties such as Epic Mickey, Monster Tale, and Ghost Trick: Phantom Detective. We couldn't fit in every game on the horizon, but if it's an exciting or noteworthy title hitting this fall or holiday season, it's in here. Though summer will soon be coming to an end, the games have never been hotter.

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Back to the Jungle

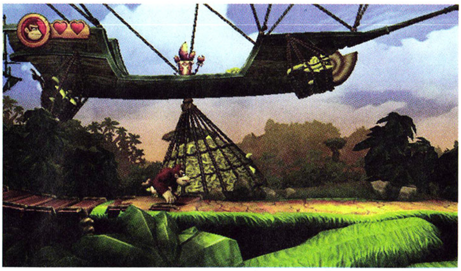
Nintendo's very first superstar swings back into action with **Donkey Kong Country Returns**, featuring classic gameplay that will make this Kong king of the fall season.

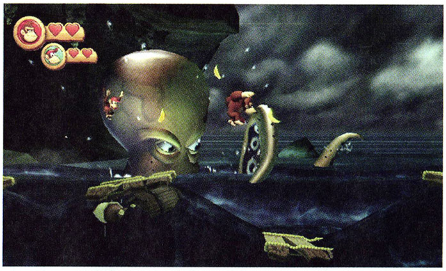
Wii PUBLISHER: **Nintendo** DEVELOPER: **Retro Studios** RELEASE: **Holiday**

This is a really surreal month to be a Nintendo fan. From magical glasses-free 3D gaming to Kid Icarus coming back to Kirby being made of yarn, it's gotten to the point where nothing should surprise us anymore. If you told me that Nintendo's next system is a pair of blue overalls that sucks you into the Mushroom Kingdom, where you wear Samus's armor and ride around on Link's horse, I'd give you the benefit of the doubt. In the aftershock of so much good Nintendo news, it was in a bewildered, giddy state that I played the first new Donkey Kong Country game in more than a decade, which—in accordance with the wacky wish world we apparently now live in—is being made by Retro, the legendary studio behind the Metroid Prime trilogy. Despite losing several lives to angry animals and runaway mine carts, I couldn't stop grinning. It would be enough simply for one of gaming's most enduring and endearing characters to be back in the role that defined him for a generation of fans, but so far Donkey Kong Country Returns seems to outclass even its classic Super NES and N64 predecessors.

IN WITH THE OLD

Right from the get-go, the game plays like the side-scrolling Donkey Kong Country titles of old but simultaneously feels like something brand-new. Gone are the prerendered sprite-based graphics that were a revolution back in the 16-bit era, and the rudimentary polygons of Donkey Kong Country 64; they're



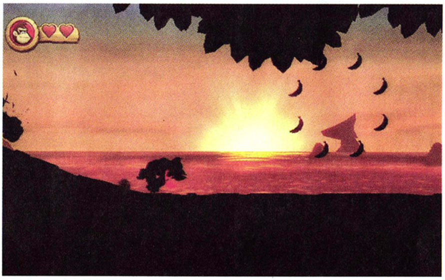


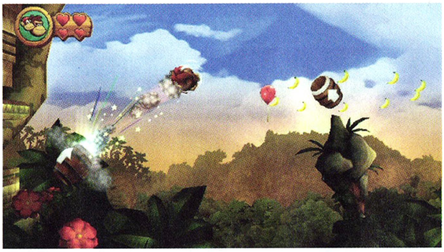
[Above left] The banana-thieving Tikis must really want to get beaten up by a gorilla. [Above] With Diddy in tow, two players can play together for the first time. [Below] Some stages are played in this breathtaking silhouette style.

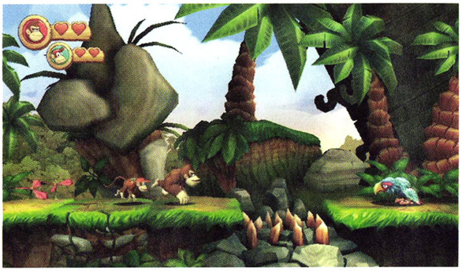
replaced by modern graphics that put the old visuals to shame. The smooth character animations are exceptionally well done—there's an impressive amount of detail to every movement, and even the jungle sways and shakes with a life of its own. And compared to the expansive widescreen layout of Donkey Kong Country Returns, the Super NES games seem positively claustrophobic. True to the series, DK's new adventure is chock-full of barrel cannons, mine carts, and bonus stages. The game's tough difficulty lives up to its heritage, as do the plentiful hidden items to collect, such as puzzle pieces and the letters *K-O-N-G*. Additionally, new versions of the series's memorable Super NES tunes max out the nostalgia factor.

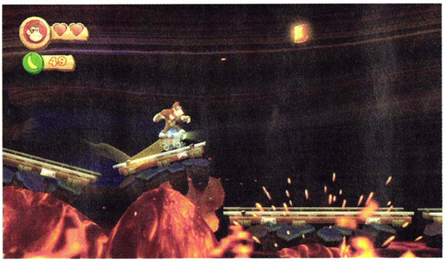
IN WITH THE NEW

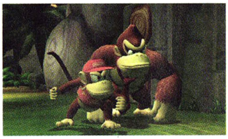
Some fans may not agree, but for this reporter's bananas, the Donkey Kong Country family of characters got way too out of control back in the day. Donkey Kong is a great ape and Diddy is OK, but that's where I, personally, draw the line. The folks at Retro must feel the same way, as the rest of the "DK Crew" are nowhere in sight. Also missing

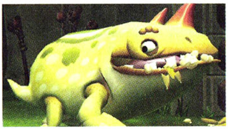












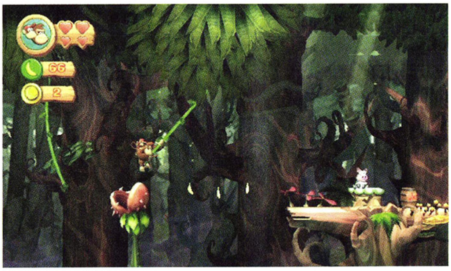
are longtime series bad guys the Kremlings, who have been replaced by enemies called Tikis. These guys have turned the island's animals against our heroes and used the critters under their control to steal Donkey Kong's banana stash. To get it back, Donkey and Diddy will travel through a long list of levels that span locations such as caverns, tropical beaches, and of course, the jungle.

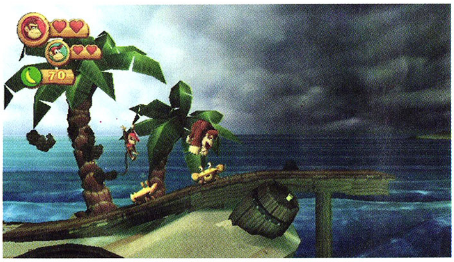
The Control Stick on the Nunchuk is used to move, while the remote's A Button lets you jump. Alternately swinging the Nunchuk and Wii Remote controllers causes Donkey Kong to repeatedly slap the ground, which is not only a good attack but also can activate triggers and open up new paths. Shaking the remote while running sends DK into a roll so that he can bowl over enemies, and shaking it while ducking makes him blow a gust of air that can uncover hidden items. If you prefer more-traditional controls, however, you can ditch the Nunchuk and hold the remote horizontally to use it NES-style.

For the first time in the series, a second person can play cooperatively as Diddy Kong, who can cartwheel, grab extra hang time with his jet pack, and fire his Peanut Pop Guns. And similar to co-op moves seen in New Super Mario Bros. Wii, Diddy can hop on Donkey Kong's back to lend the big guy his jet-pack hover ability while staying clear of danger. It's a lot of fun to play a Donkey Kong Country game with a friend, even though the required coordination makes some spots more challenging, such as the frantic rollercoaster mine-cart-jumping areas. Although two players is the max, anyone who enjoyed the team approach in New Super Mario Bros. Wii should have a similarly good time here.

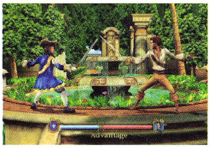
A BARREL OF FUN

Even though I've spent a fair amount of time playing several levels of the new Donkey Kong Country, it's still hard to believe the game exists. A few months ago, who would have guessed that this 16-year-old series would make a return, or that the makers of Metroid Prime weren't working on a new first-person shooter? Even better than the thrill of the surprise, though, is the fact that our play time with Donkey Kong Country Returns proves it to be the kind of fun, deep, triple-A title Nintendo fans love. With this and the two recent Mario games—and upcoming titles such as Kirby: Epic Yarn, Epic Mickey, and three new Sonic games—we've entered a new golden age for fans of platformers. **—CHRIS S.**





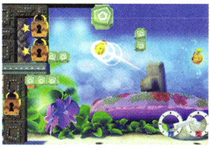
[Left] DK's jumps have the same floaty feel that they did on the Super NES. [Above] It wouldn't be a Donkey Kong Country game without plenty of vines to swing on, mine carts to ride, and barrels to blast out of.



Sid Meier's Pirates!

Wii PUBLISHER: **2K Games** DEVELOPER: **2K Shanghai** RELEASE: **Fall**

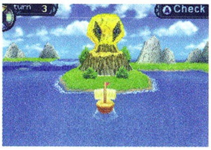
If you've ever wanted to be a pirate but didn't care to part with one of your eyes and/or legs, this game is for you. Raid ships, pillage ports, duel foes, and romance the ladies in this update to the PC classic.



FlingSmash

Wii PUBLISHER: **Nintendo** DEVELOPER: **Artoon** RELEASE: **Fall**

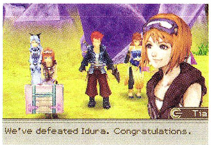
FlingSmash is like a bizarre amalgamation of pinball, tennis, and old-school action-side-scroller. The game utilizes the Wii MotionPlus accessory to precisely measure your swings as you help spherical hero Zip smash through everything in his path.



Etrian Odyssey III: The Drowned City

DS PUBLISHER: **Atlus** DEVELOPER: **Atlus** RELEASE: **September**

Atlus's series of famously challenging dungeon crawlers is back for a third installment. Set in a coastal city filled with flooded ruins, Etrian Odyssey III adds a naval-exploration minigame and replaces the series's traditional character classes with nine new flavors of adventurer.

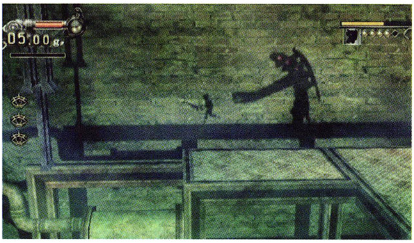


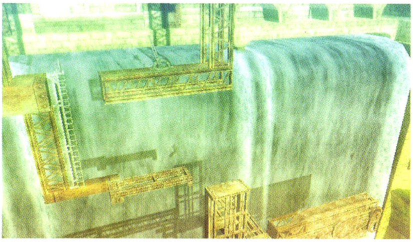
We've defeated Idura. Congratulations.

Lufia: Curse of the Sinistrals

DS PUBLISHER: **Natsume** DEVELOPER: **Neverland** RELEASE: **Fall**

The Super NES cult classic has been reborn! While the 3D environments and real-time combat in Curse of the Sinistrals bear little resemblance to the Lufia series of yore, the game follows the same story and features the same satisfying focus on puzzle-filled dungeons.





Lost in Shadow

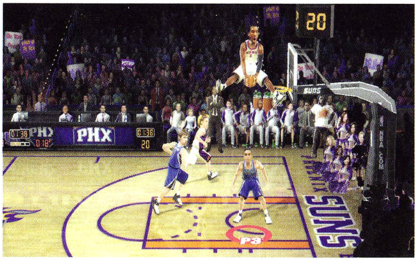
Wii PUBLISHER: **Hudson** DEVELOPER: **Hudson** RELEASE: **Fall**

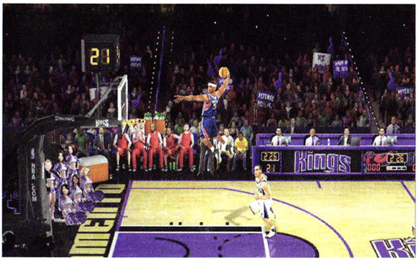
As a wholly original effort from a small publisher, Lost in Shadow seems destined to fly under the radar. That could be a real shame, because what we've played of the shadow-themed adventure thus far is challenging, highly creative, and thoroughly mesmerizing. So it's up to you, enlightened reader! Don't let this one slip by unnoticed.

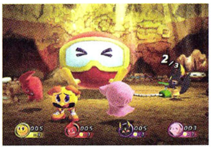
NBA Jam

Wii PUBLISHER: **EA Sports** DEVELOPER: **EA Canada** RELEASE: **October**

The ultraarcadey two-on-two basketball game returns, and it's just as fun as it ever was. Playing with current real-world teams and players, as well as a variety of basketball legends such as Dennis Rodman and Hakeem Olajuwon, we couldn't help saying "Boomshakalaka!" as we dunked on each other.



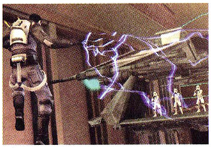




Pac-Man Party

Wii PUBLISHER: **Namco Bandai** DEVELOPER: **Namco Bandai** RELEASE: **Fall**

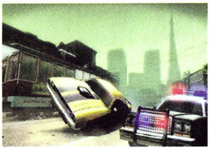
Pac-Man Party is essentially a Pac-Man take on the Mario Party formula, with 45 minigames and some Monopoly-style elements thrown in. And get this—the currency you collect is cookies! Delish!



Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II

Wii PUBLISHER: **LucasArts** DEVELOPER: **Red Fly** RELEASE: **October**

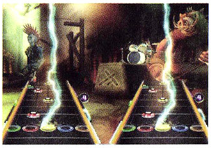
Spoiler alert: Force Unleashed protagonist Starkiller died at the end of the first game. Now he's back—or his identical clone is, anyway—and he's once again utilizing his arsenal of powerful Force abilities against the Empire.



Driver San Francisco

Wii PUBLISHER: **Ubisoft** DEVELOPER: **Ubisoft Reflections** RELEASE: **Holiday**

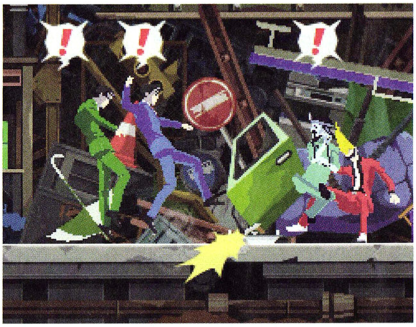
The Driver franchise returns to the City by the Bay in this prequel to the first game. You can expect plentiful Hollywood-style car chases as you progress through a story told from three different perspectives.

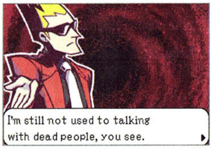


Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock

Wii PUBLISHER: **Activision** DEVELOPER: **Vicarious Visions** RELEASE: **September**

After so many iterations, how do you make Guitar Hero exciting again? By giving it a heavy-metal-infused, story-focused quest mode! And the traditional Guitar Hero experience is included, too!





I'm still not used to talking with dead people, you see.

Ghost Trick: Phantom Detective

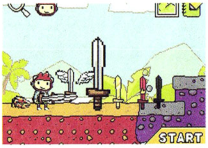
DS PUBLISHER: **Capcom** DEVELOPER: **Capcom** RELEASE: **Winter**

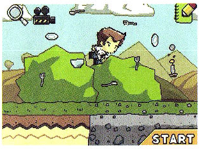
Two things stood out after we finally got our hands on Ghost Trick: first, the game looks beautiful in motion, and second, being dead ain't easy. Possessing and manipulating objects is a snap, but stringing those actions into a sequence that allows you to save people from a would-be killer is pretty challenging—and a heck of a lot of fun.

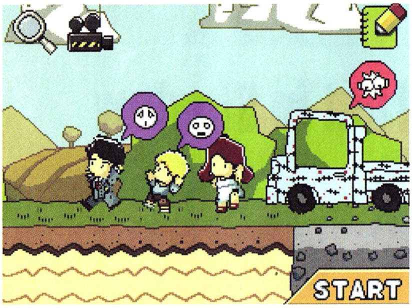
Super Scribblenauts

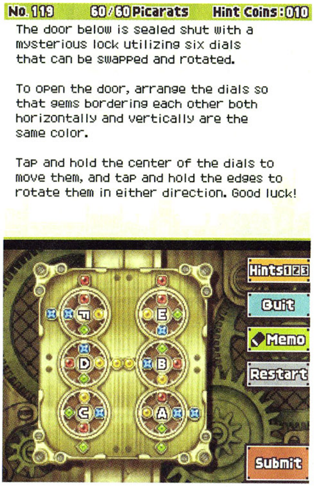
DS PUBLISHER: **Warner Bros. Interactive** DEVELOPER: **5th Cell** RELEASE: **October**

Had we been allowed to, the NP staff would have spent weeks playing Super Scribblenauts. The game truly delivers on its promise of improved controls, and the inclusion of adjectives makes the creative possibilities essentially infinite. We can't wait for the final game so we can unleash our invincible bionic badger army upon the world!







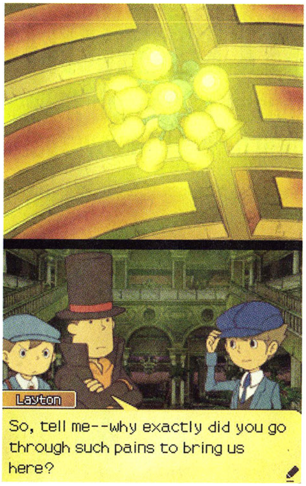


No. 119 60/60 Picarats Hint Coins: 010

The door below is sealed shut with a mysterious lock utilizing six dials that can be swapped and rotated.

To open the door, arrange the dials so that gems bordering each other both horizontally and vertically are the same color.

Tap and hold the center of the dials to move them, and tap and hold the edges to rotate them in either direction. Good luck!



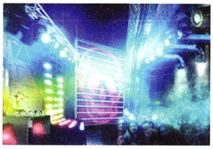
Layton

So, tell me--why exactly did you go through such pains to bring us here?

Professor Layton and the Unwound Future

DS PUBLISHER: **Nintendo** DEVELOPER: **Level-5** RELEASE: **September**

Things have always been a little peculiar in the Professor Layton series, and that remains the case in the third chapter, Professor Layton and the Unwound Future. Shortly after the professor and his young assistant, Luke, witness a time-travel experiment gone horribly awry, they receive a letter that was apparently sent by Luke's older self from 10 years in the future! Naturally, a puzzle-filled mystery ensues, causing the duo to cross paths with quirky characters and face a wide assortment of puzzles—more than 165 in all—focusing on logic, reasoning, math, wordplay, and more. You'll be able to download additional puzzles to test the ol' gray matter, plus you can connect to the previous Professor Layton titles via a password to unlock bonus content. Puzzle fans won't have long to wait, either; the game hits on September 12.



DJ Hero 2

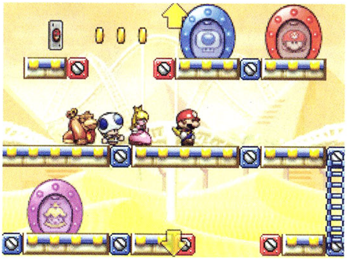
Wii PUBLISHER: **Activision** DEVELOPER: **FreeStyleGames** RELEASE: **Fall**

The addition of freestyle scratching and freestyle crossfade in DJ Hero 2 should give players greater musical freedom than they had in the original game. Other highlights include karaoke-style microphone support, new DMC-inspired battles, and a more diverse soundtrack.

Rune Factory 3: A Fantasy Harvest Moon

DS PUBLISHER: **Natsume** DEVELOPER: **Neverland** RELEASE: **September**

The Rune Factory series mixes the farming elements of Harvest Moon with swords-and-sorcery action-RPG elements. New features in this installment include the ability to transform into a sheeplike monster at will and the option to adventure alongside your heroine of choice.



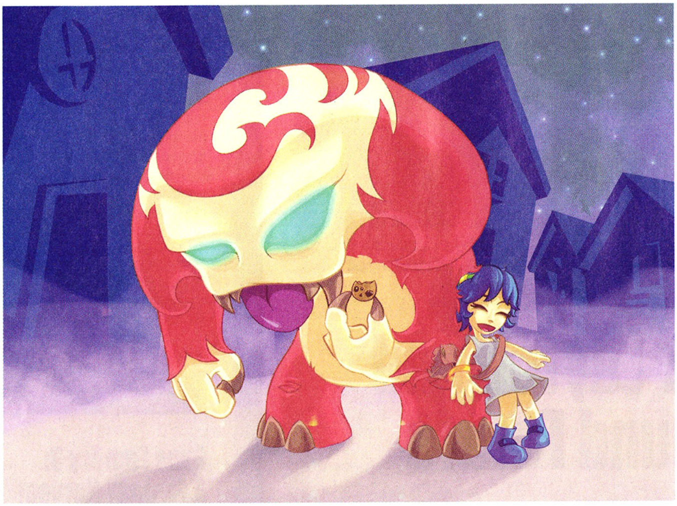
Mario vs. Donkey Kong: Mini-Land Mayhem!

DS PUBLISHER: **Nintendo** DEVELOPER: **NST** RELEASE: **Winter**

In the latest installment of the Mario vs. Donkey Kong action-puzzle series, it's up to you to move girders, place pipes, and otherwise manipulate the environment to get Mini Mario toys safely to each stage's exit. The excellent custom-level creator is back, allowing you to make and share your own stages.

Wonder Girl in Monster World

Part platformer and part monster-raising sim, Majesco's **Monster Tale** is a game for anyone who's ever wanted to teach their virtual pet to fight.



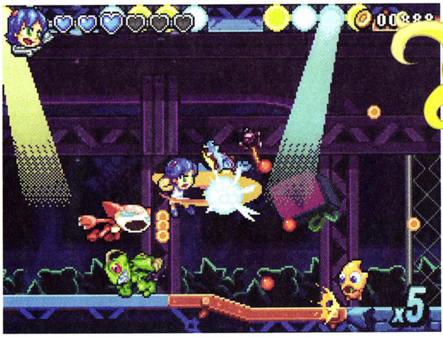
DS PUBLISHER: **Majesco** DEVELOPER: **DreamRift** RELEASE: **December**

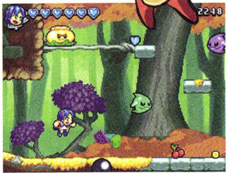
While young Ellie leaps and dashes her way through Monster World, slapping beasties with her handbag, her newborn monster Chomp roams the touch screen below. When Ellie doesn't need him on the battlefield, Chomp busies himself with training, learning new abilities, and boosting his stats with the books, cookies, and treasure chests that Ellie drops into his lair. Always learning, always evolving, Chomp is the key to both traversing the rough terrain of his homeworld and protecting Ellie from its dangerous denizens.

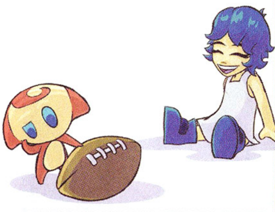
Having a different game unfold on each screen of the Nintendo DS system has become something of a habit for Peter Ong, who most recently served as the lead designer of Henry Hatsworth in the Puzzling Adventure. (After completing Henry Hatsworth, Ong and lead programmer Ryan Pijai left Electronic Arts to establish an independent studio named DreamRift.) Hatsworth also featured a colorful platformer on the top screen, but tied it into a falling-block puzzle game below. The mechanic worked well and the game earned rave reviews, but Ong wasn't entirely satisfied with the way players were forced to move from one game to the other. "We want to capture the depth and diversity in gameplay that can come from having two radically different types of games on each screen, [but with Monster Tale], we want to integrate the two more seamlessly to avoid taking the player out of the game," he explains. "One of the keys to this is the idea of having a character the player controls be able to move seamlessly between the two screens, instead of the game itself changing screens." In other words, Monster Tale may indeed be two games in one, but you only ever play the top one. Raising Chomp is a simple matter of dividing his time between the battlefield and his training area, and you can move him from one locale to the other with a simple tap of the X Button.

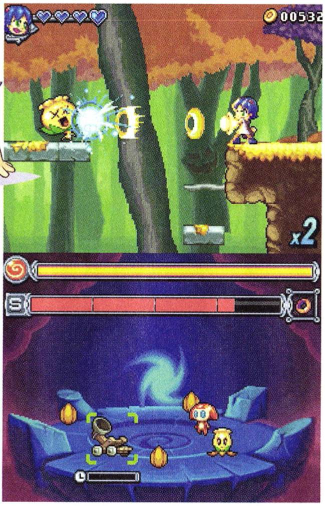
Creature on the Loose

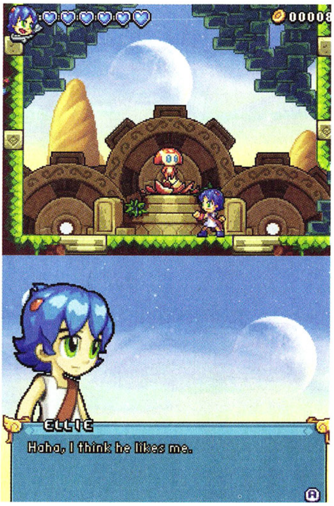
While the bright dot-pixel graphics are reminiscent of Ong's previous game, Monster Tale seems to owe more to Metroid and Castlevania than to the straightforward action titles that inspired Henry Hatsworth.





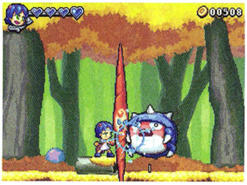






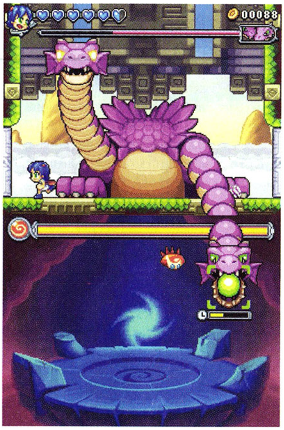
ELLIE
Haha, I think he likes me.

[Below] Chomp gains many abilities throughout the game, including turning himself into a spiky spear of destruction!

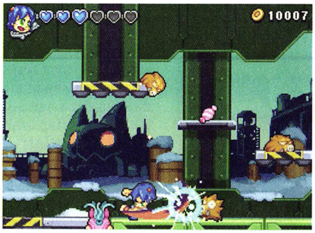


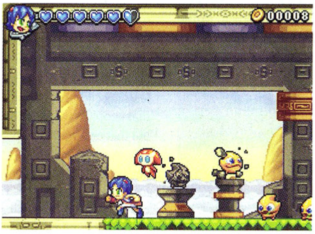
Rather than simple unidirectional levels packed with enemies, Monster Tale provides an open world full of puzzlelike obstacles that Ellie can clear as she learns new abilities from the obelisks that have been scattered throughout the maps. In our brief demo, Ellie learned to roll, swing her bag, fire energy beams, and fire longer-range projectiles, each providing access to new areas of the map. Meanwhile, Chomp is constantly leveling up and learning new abilities. His powers include twisting into a pair of vertical spikes that can impale enemies above and below, performing a deadly barrel roll toward distant foes or switches, and using his tongue like a trampoline to bounce Ellie to higher parts of the map. With two ever-evolving lead characters, Monster Tale offers a fast-paced experience in which new powers are unlocked at a blistering pace.

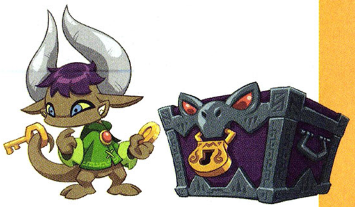
The open structure feels a lot like Metroid, while the game's automap, save rooms, and shops owe a clear debt to the core mechanics of the DS Castlevania titles. "DreamRift is comprised of people whose fondest experiences growing up involve



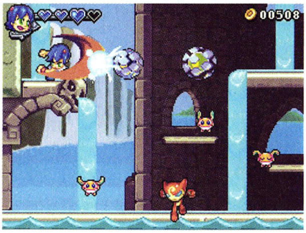
[Above] At times, the action spans both screens.

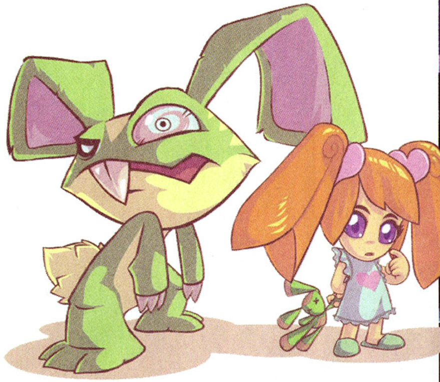


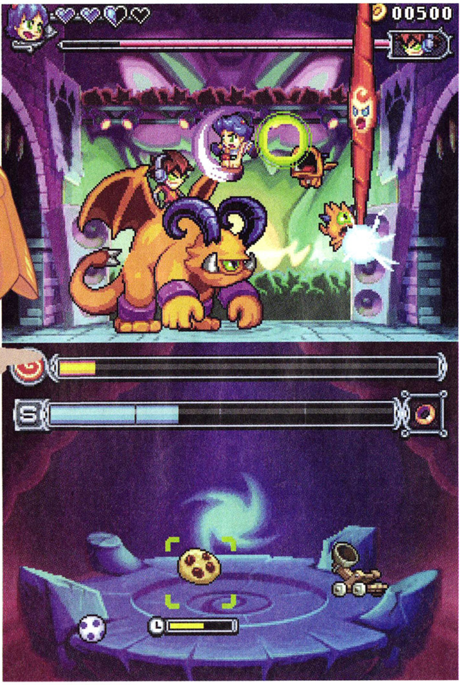


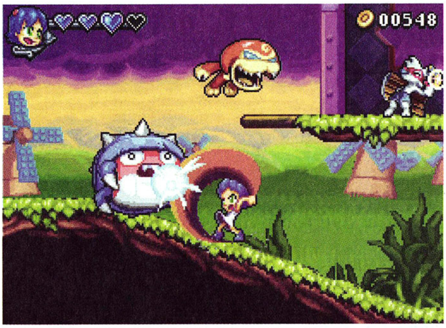


[Above] The shopkeeper will help you—for a price.

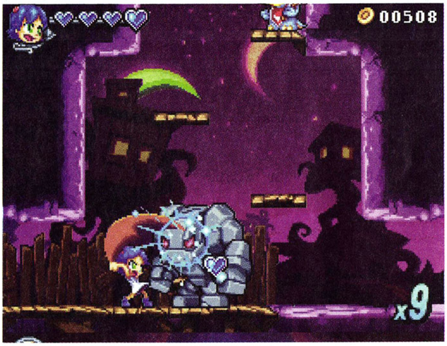








Chomp's the monster, but Ellie's not helpless either. She has an evolving skill set to help her take down nasties with both ranged and melee attacks.



playing our favorite 2D games," says Ong. "We feel very privileged to have the opportunity to express our appreciation for the best 2D games by exploring new ways to evolve their foundation, especially in an era in which those principles may be forgotten or ignored."

Ong's love for the games of yore has led to an appreciation for a good challenge, but he concedes that the team may have gone too far with the notoriously difficult Henry Hatsworth. While it's too early to tell if Monster Tale will be as tough as its predecessor, Ong has at least committed to a much gentler learning curve, declaring, "I believe that people want to be challenged, but that a game should communicate clearly, ramp up difficulty smoothly, and provide what the player needs to succeed as long as the player contributes their own fair effort."

Chomping at the Bit

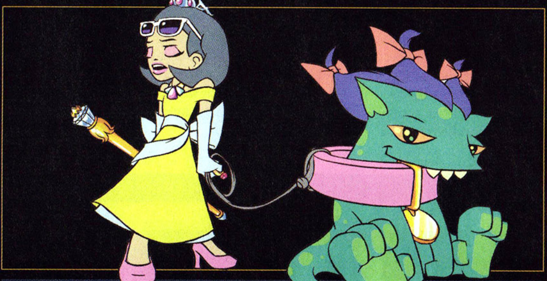
If it weren't for the strange red creature lurking in the touch screen, Monster Tale might feel like any other Metroid-inspired platformer. But Chomp adds a new dimension to the game, providing long-term strategic elements and a way to personalize each player's adventure. Chomp begins the game as a hatchling that's capable of doing little more than floating around the screen and occasionally smacking foes. But each time he intervenes on the upper screen or interacts with an object on the lower screen, he gains experience points that unlock new abilities, stat-boosting traits, and alternate evolutions. Evolutions allow you to direct Chomp's priorities, making him more aggressive, more defensive, or more skilled at long-term combat. Each form learns different abilities, and if you stick with a form long enough to master its abilities, you'll be able to equip them to Chomp's other evolutions. Some abilities change Chomp's default AI behavior, but most are special moves that Ellie can use in combat by equipping them to a button combination. Even when he isn't risking his own hide on the battlefield, Chomp can help out by playing with the objects Ellie drops down to him, kicking soccer balls at foes, or bombarding the battlefield with a toy catapult.

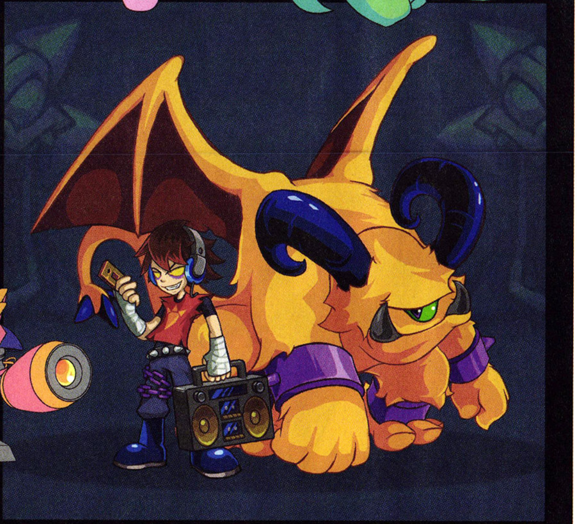
But Ong and his team view Chomp as more than just a game mechanic. "As Chomp grows and his abilities become more formidable, he becomes more and more crucial to protecting Ellie. These aspects of their relationship allow us to tell a story with some unexpectedly emotional moments," he promises. Fans of Henry Hatsworth's quirky sense of humor will find plenty of cute touches here, like the way Chomp suddenly dons a pair of reading glasses whenever Ellie drops him a book, but Monster Tale is much more heartfelt than its predecessor. And according to Ong, that tenderness just might make it a stronger game in the long run. "I've become quite attached to Ellie and Chomp," he tells us, "and I feel quite the obligation to do them justice with the game that they deserve."—**CASEY L.**

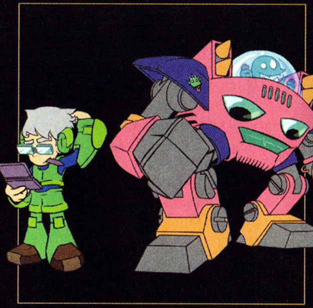
THE KID KINGS OF MONSTER WORLD

It isn't clear how or why people arrive in Monster World, but for some reason it always seems to be children who find the path. Some, like Ellie, just want to go home. But some revel in the freedom of the place, and find the native monsters to be surprisingly easy to dominate.

The true villains Ellie will face are not inhuman monsters, but the lost and disturbed children who have preceded her to Monster World and enslaved monsters of their own. Most have chosen to stay in order to pursue their own fantasies, building entire kingdoms around their dreams and insecurities. One has built a world of speakers and spotlights to live out his rock-star fantasies with an entourage of complacent beasts. Others have built monster societies around their love for robotics or fashion. These child tyrants, along with their pets, will prove to be potent obstacles in Ellie's quest to find a way home.







The Lord of the Rings: Aragorn's Quest

Wii **PUBLISHER: Warner Bros. Interactive DEVELOPER: Headstrong Games RELEASE: September**

This fanciful take on the Lord of the Rings mythos is getting an extra layer of movie authenticity. We've known for a while that John Rhys-Davies (Gimli) and Sean Astin (Sam) were lending their voices, but other cast members will be involved as well.

Tom Clancy's H.A.W.X. 2

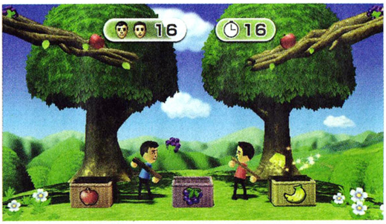
Wii **PUBLISHER: Ubisoft DEVELOPER: Ubisoft Romania RELEASE: November**

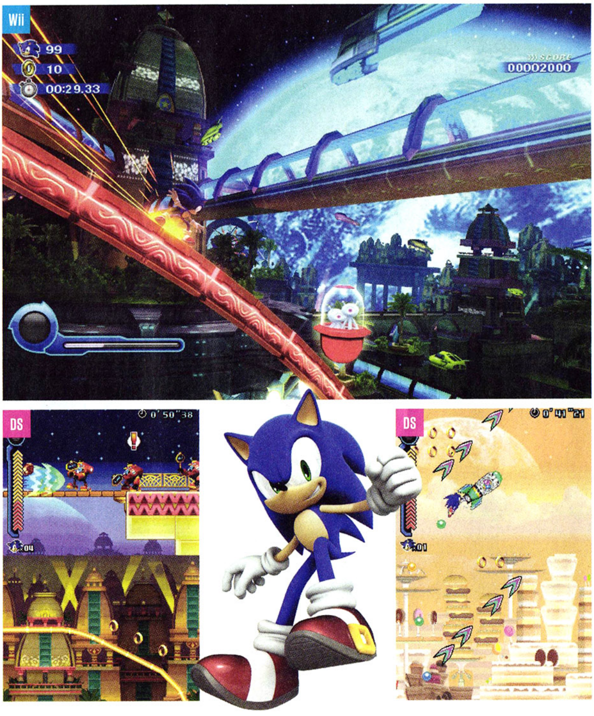
The Wii-exclusive version of H.A.W.X. 2 boasts its own unique storyline, art style, and emphasis on variety. Levels range from low-altitude, on-rails sorties à la Afterburner to free-roaming, Ace Combat-style dogfights to escaping the wreckage of the International Space Station by skydiving back to Earth.

Wii Party

Wii **PUBLISHER: Nintendo DEVELOPER: Nd CUBE RELEASE: Fall**

This season's big, broadly appealing, Mii-character funfest is Wii Party, a collection of more than 70 minigames that brings gaming into your living room like never before. For example, in one event players race to pick up the Wii Remote controller that emits a specified animal noise. With 13 modes that feature cooperative and competitive play for up to four players, the party should go on and on.





Sonic Colors

Wii DS **PUBLISHER: Sega DEVELOPER: Sonic Team (Wii)/ Dimps (DS) RELEASE: Holiday**

OK, we'll be the first to admit it: Sonic Colors does not exactly have the coolest-sounding name around. We asked Sega to change it, but they wouldn't budge. If you can ignore that (and look past some of the questionable design choices in other Sonic games released over the past few years), you'll discover that Sonic Colors is an extremely promising high-speed thrill ride of a platformer. The side-view segments in the Wii version are a lot like the daytime stages in Sonic Unleashed (you know, the parts that everybody liked), while the full-on behind-the-back scenes are reminiscent of the best parts of the Sonic Adventure games; the DS version of Sonic Colors, meanwhile, delivers traditional 2D Sonic goodness. The new Wisp power-ups are an unobtrusive way to add some variety to the action, and the premise of Dr. Robotnik creating a giant theme park in space is pretty entertaining.

Sunny Disposition

Some light is shed on Camelot's latest RPG, **Golden Sun: Dark Dawn** for Nintendo DS.

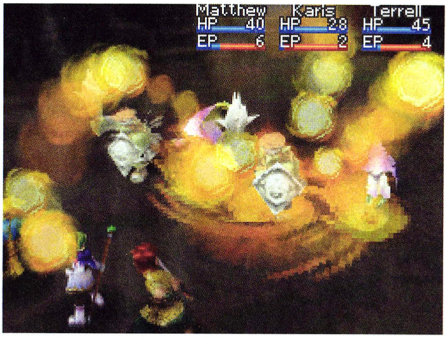
DS PUBLISHER: **Nintendo** DEVELOPER: **Camelot** RELEASE: **Holiday**

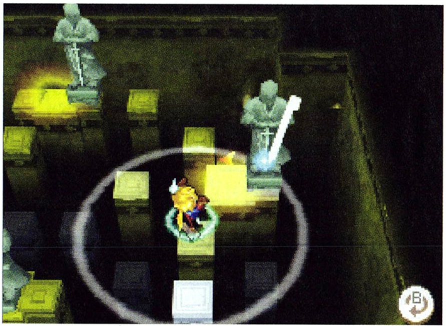
It's been seven real-world years since Golden Sun: The Lost Age hit the Game Boy Advance, but time moves more quickly in the world of Weyard. Three in-game decades after the heroes of The Lost Age used the power of the Golden Sun to heal the world, the people aren't living happily ever after. Weyard is in danger once again due to Psynergy Vortices that drain the world of Psynergy (think magic). Fortunately, the descendants of The Lost Age's heroes are more than willing to undertake the task of saving the day.

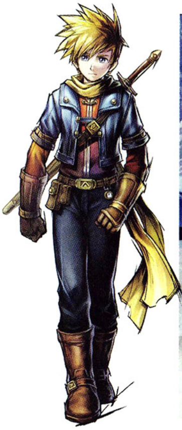
One such descendant is main character Matthew, who can use Psynergy to move things and launch fireballs. In the first of two parts of our demo—the Adventure-mode portion—we guided Matthew through the Psynergy Training Grounds, in which he has to use his Psynergy abilities (controllable via the stylus) to shift stone columns out of his path and hit targets. After completing the training exercises, we explored a statue-filled dungeon wherein Matthew must once again utilize his Psynergy skills to open platforms that he can jump across to proceed to the end of this part of the demo. Using Matthew's powers to solve puzzles was a snap thanks to the touch-screen-centric control scheme.

The second part of the demo—Battle mode—was entirely combat-focused, with sword-bearer Matthew, staff-swinger Karis, and axe-wielder Tyrell fighting three waves of enemies. In addition to their melee weapons, the trio can also use Psynergy. Matthew has a variety of stone spells; Karis uses wind to hurt enemies and heal allies; and Tyrell unleashes an array of fire attacks. The party also has creatures called Djinn that can assist in battle.

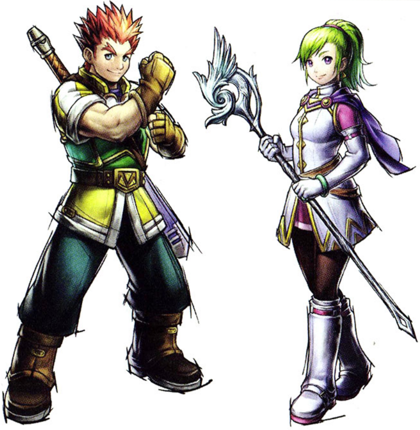
We got only a brief taste of Golden Sun: Dark Dawn, but it was enough to give us a sense of the basic mechanics. The game seems to retain the Golden Sun feel while adding a new stylus-heavy control scheme—which is exactly what we were hoping for from a Golden Sun title on the Nintendo DS. **—JUSTIN C.**







Matthew
HP 40
Karis
HP 28
Terrell
HP 45



Arcade Board

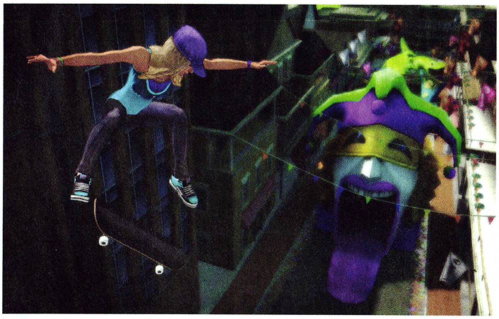
Tony Hawk: Shred tries to help the series recover from a rough Ride.

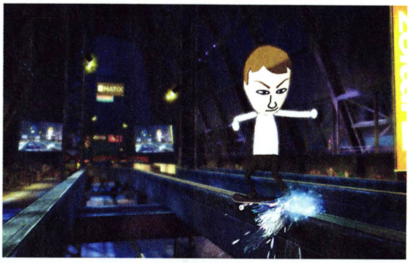
Wii **PUBLISHER: Activision** DEVELOPER: **Buzz Monkey** RELEASE: **Fall**

Once among the most celebrated brands in video gaming, the Tony Hawk franchise has been on a skid recently, culminating with last year's critically eviscerated Tony Hawk: Ride. So rather than continue along the same sim-focused path, Activision and developer Buzz Monkey are turning to arcades for inspiration. Tony Hawk: Shred eschews any notion of realistic skateboarding in favor of big air, crazy stunts, and plenty of good old-fashioned property damage.

The changes start with putting your skater on a constant forward path, which is intended to let players concentrate on making the game's death-defying jumps and pulling off as many tricks as possible. How much steering you do is up to you. Casual mode allows you to choose certain branching paths but otherwise keeps you on rails for the most part, while Hardcore mode gives you complete freedom of movement from left to right. (Additional options fall between these two extremes.) The game uses the same board peripheral as Ride, but Buzz Monkey promises Shred will feel more responsive since the studio has had an extra year to work with the hardware.

The developers also understand the need for plenty of spectacle to complement the new arcade-style approach. Among the levels we saw in action was one set in New Orleans, where you can enter a shopping center by crashing through a window (and exit the same way), grind along a giant carnival ride shaped like a crocodile, and trigger jazz riffs by executing certain stunts. In Wallows, Hawaii, you'll have the opportunity to skate the edge of a picturesque waterfall before demolishing a dilapidated overpass. And during a particularly harrowing drop in Bristol, England, a crane will swing its cargo into place just in time to



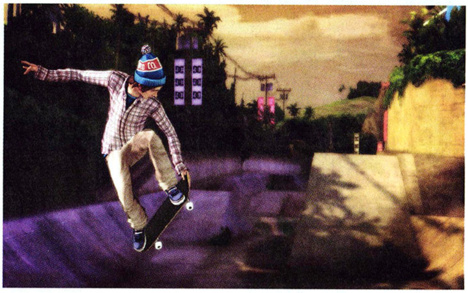


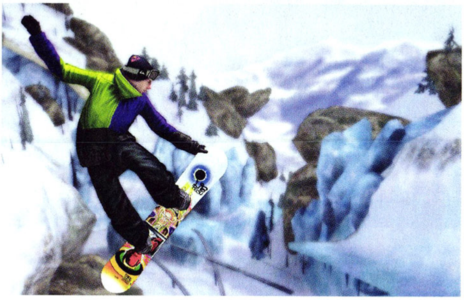
[Left] Because the three-story drop wasn't terrifying enough.... [Above] Even in Mii form, Tony Hawk's a bit crazy.

catch you. All the while, you can perform myriad tricks and grind variations by tilting, lifting, and rotating the board peripheral. Doing so will rack up points and fill your Style meter, which in turn grants access to your skater's unique signature moves (complete with flashy special effects). Shred's character roster consists of 11 professional skateboarders and snowboarders (more on that in a moment), as well as less-traditional athletes such as a caveman, a pirate, and an alien. You can also play as Mii versions of the pros or as any of your own Mii characters.

Another way Shred is shaking up the franchise is with the introduction of a snowboarding component. If Shaun White is going to star in a skateboarding game, we suppose the Birdman has every right to hit the slopes. The snowboarding stages follow the same basic principles as their asphalt counterparts. That means grinding chairlifts, fleeing from avalanches, and landing on a bundle of logs being airlifted by a helicopter.

To encourage repeat playthroughs, every skateboarding and snowboarding stage contains multiple paths, and there are four single-player modes, each with its own unique conditions. Challenge mode, for instance, gives you a very specific set of tasks to be performed at assigned locations. In Point Rush, on the other hand, your goal is simply to reach the end of the stage as quickly as possible, and filling your Style meter in this mode gives you a temporary speed boost. Rounding out the package is an offline Party mode for up to eight players. If nothing else, watching a friend's Mii character bail from atop a 50-foot crane sounds like it could be pretty amusing. **—STEVE T.**





ZOO YORK
Steakhouse
ZOO YORK

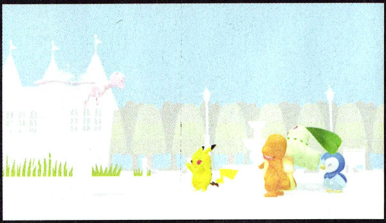
PokéPark Wii: Pikachu's Adventure

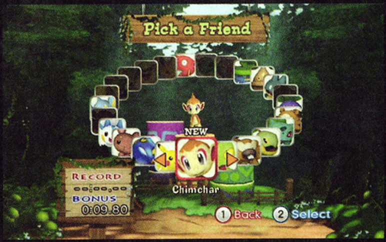
Wii PUBLISHER: **Nintendo** DEVELOPER: **Creatures Inc./The Pokémon Company**
RELEASE: **Holiday**

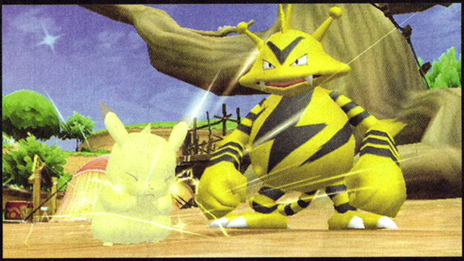
What could be more fun than a theme park? How about a theme park chock-full of Pokémon? PokéPark Wii: Pikachu's Adventure allows you to take on the role of the adorable Pikachu, who has been invited to the park by the Pokémon Mew. Pieces of the Sky Prism have gone missing, and only the lovable Electric-type Pokémon can find them.

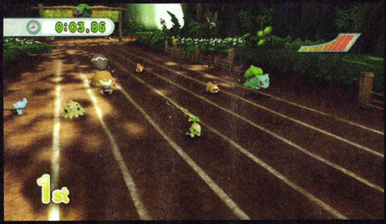
While exploring the PokéPark, Pikachu travels through multiple Zones and enjoys a variety of different Attractions and Skill Games. Along the way, Pikachu will encounter other Pokémon that wish to face off in a Skill Game. Once they have been defeated, these former rivals become Pikachu's friends, and these new buddies can be taken into Attractions.

Traveling through the PokéPark is simple—Pikachu is controlled by the Wii Remote held horizontally. Once the Skill Games and Attractions begin, though, different types of motion controls come into play. Since you're bound to encounter lots of memorable moments in the PokéPark, the game allows you to snap pictures of your favorite Pokémon in the game to save to an SD card. Of course, the best part about PokéPark Wii: Pikachu's Adventure is that there's no need to stand in line at any of the Attractions. **—PHIL T.**









Pokémon Ranger: Guardian Signs

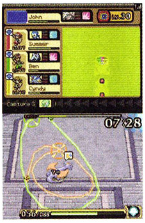
DS PUBLISHER: **Nintendo** DEVELOPER: **Creatures Inc./The Pokémon Company** RELEASE: **Fall**

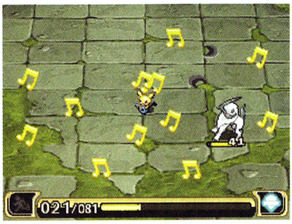
In this third entry in the popular Pokémon Ranger series, you must protect the Pokémon and humans of the all-new Oblivia region from the dastardly Pokémon Pinchers, who are capturing the innocent Pokémon for their own nefarious purposes.

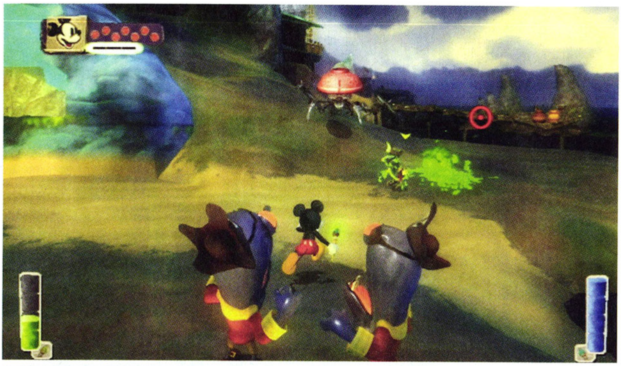
As a Pokémon Ranger, you're armed with a Capture Styler, a device that lets you capture wild Pokémon by drawing circles around them on the Nintendo DS touch screen with the stylus. You'll have to be quick, though—those Pokémon aren't going to just sit there and let you capture them. The Styler gains more powers and abilities as you progress through the game, allowing all sorts of new techniques to capture Pokémon.

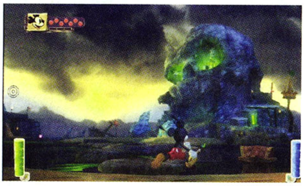
Additionally, you'll use the stylus to draw special Ranger Signs on the touch screen to summon Pokémon that you have befriended on your journey. Among these powerful allies are Legendary Pokémon like Raikou, Entei, and Suicune.

You're not alone on this adventure. Joining you is your partner, Ukulele Pichu, who doesn't go anywhere without its favorite musical instrument. There is also the option to enlist the help of your friends via a local wireless connection. Up to four people can play through certain missions and learn more of the secrets contained within the Oblivia region. **—PHIL T.**





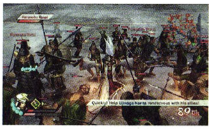




Epic Mickey

Wii **PUBLISHER:** **Disney Interactive** **DEVELOPER:** **Junction Point** **RELEASE:** **Holiday**

We've been excited by Epic Mickey for a while, so it was very gratifying to go hands-on with it and discover that the gameplay is as good as the concept. The mechanics of creating and destroying with paint and thinner are simply a blast. One thing has changed, however, from our earlier reports on the game: Mickey's physical appearance is no longer altered based on your actions (although you can still be a helpful hero or a mischievous troublemaker). As creative director Warren Spector explains it, "There was a point where he was wearing purple pants and we changed the animations and all that stuff—and I just looked at it and I said, 'You know, I don't even like this. I don't want to do this.' And I looked at [our regular Mickey character model], and I love this little guy. I'm so proud of the team, because we've captured, I think, the essence of the old-school classic Mickey...and I just made a decision that I didn't want to change him. The behaviors are still there; you can still use paint and thinner how you want, and it'll still show you the consequences of that. But the visualization of it absolutely changed, and it's not because of Disney pressure. It's not because of fan outrage. It's because I am making this game what I want it to be."



Samurai Warriors 3

Wii **PUBLISHER:** **Nintendo**
DEVELOPER: **Tecmo Koei**
RELEASE: **September**

Hundreds of foes will fall before your blade when you jump into the fray in Samurai Warriors 3. In addition to the chaotic battles that the series is known for, the game features a new mode inspired by a Nintendo's Japanese 8-bit classic The Mysterious Murasame Castle.

WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2011

Wii **PUBLISHER:** **THQ**
DEVELOPER: **Yuke's**
RELEASE: **October**

THQ's long-running wrestling franchise shows no signs of slowing down. Grappling fans can expect refinements across the board, including more customization options, more choices in story mode, and a roster of more than 70 characters, including several new WWE superstars.

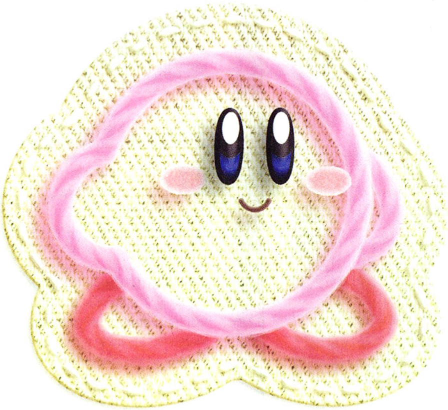
Rock Band 3

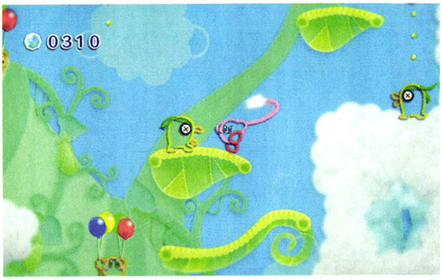
PUBLISHER: **MTV Games** **DEVELOPER:** **Harmonix** **RELEASE:** **Holiday** Wii

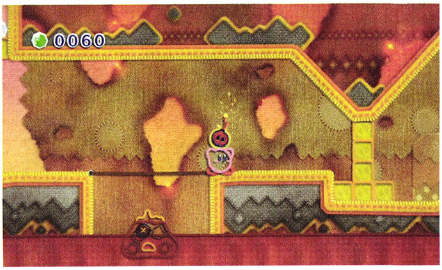
Rock Band 3 takes the rhythm game to the next level—it can possibly teach you how to play real-life instruments with its Pro mode, which allows you to use all 25 keys on the keyboard peripheral, as well as a working six-string Fender guitar. Don't worry—the accessible core Rock Band experience (featuring 83 new songs) remains intact.

Cut from a Different Cloth

Kirby's Epic Yarn for Wii changes the fabric of gaming reality.





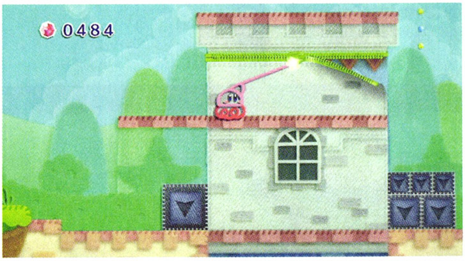


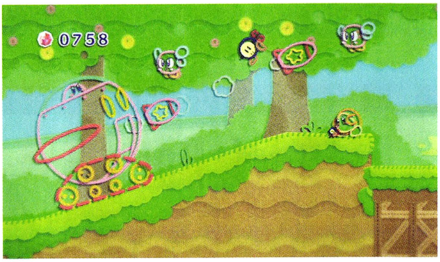
Wii PUBLISHER: **Nintendo** DEVELOPER: **Good-Feel** RELEASE: **Fall**

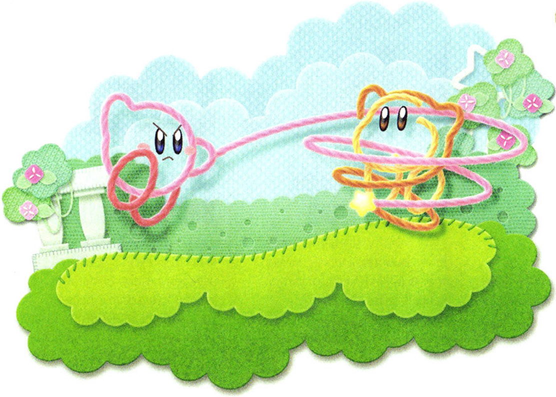
Forget everything you think you know about Nintendo's round, pink, enemy-inhaling, ability-stealing hero, Kirby. OK—so he's actually still round and pink, but you can forget about the rest. That's because the makers of Wario Land: Shake It! are redefining what the character is all about in Kirby's Epic Yarn for the Wii console—and it could very well be the best Kirby game yet.

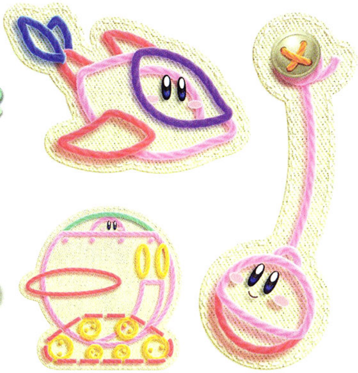
The fun begins when Kirby is somehow sucked into a world within a magic sock. Yes, we know it's weird, and no, that doesn't bother us in the slightest. Inside the sock, Kirby finds that he's now made out of yarn—in fact, pretty much every character is made out of yarn—and the entire world is a patchwork collection of cloth and assorted textiles. To say it's unique is an understatement; there's nothing else like it in video games, and it looks absolutely awesome in motion—a bright, colorful tapestry come to remarkably fluid life. Traditionally themed level environments (caves, forests, towns, underwater areas, volcanoes) feel completely new; the visuals are particularly mesmerizing when fabric is used to replicate something you wouldn't expect, such as flowing water or a flaming bird boss.

And the aesthetic isn't just for show. In yarn form, Kirby might not have his old powers, but he can reach out with a whiplike strand to grab whatever's nearby. You can pull patches off the wall to reveal hidden goodies, grab onto buttons to swing through the air, yank zippers to unzip a building and reveal







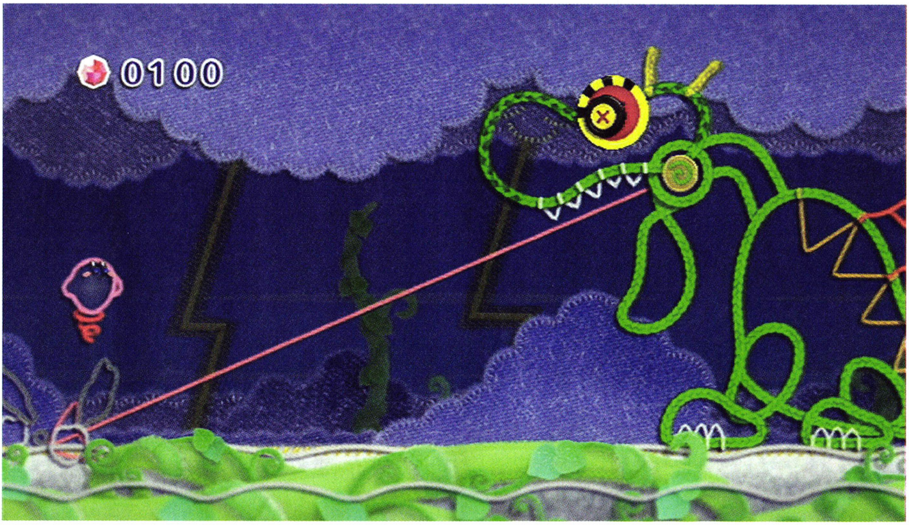


Even after being turned into yarn, Kirby can morph into a variety of different forms.

what's inside, or tug on a string to move foreground elements closer together (complete with a nifty wrinkled-cloth effect). You're not limited to just environmental interactions, either; you can grab and throw enemies, or even latch onto a flying critter to hitch a ride. The gameplay is somewhat reminiscent of Namco Bandai's underrated Wii platformer Klonoa.

As captivating as it is to run, jump, and grab your way through the levels, the action doesn't stop there. At certain points Kirby can turn into various forms—including a car, a UFO, a fish-shaped submarine, and a massive battle tank—to give himself a little extra oomph. The tank form is especially cool in two-player mode (the whole game can be played cooperatively); one player controls melee attacks while the other tilts the Wii Remote controller to fire missiles at different angles.

The only concern we have about the game so far is that it feels a little bit on the easy side, but we'll certainly withhold judgment until we've played the final product. At the very least, Kirby's Epic Yarn will offer a ton of 2D platforming fun and the freshest take on the character in years. **—CHRIS H.**



NHL Slapshot

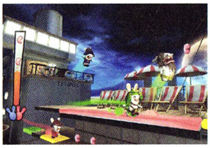
Wii PUBLISHER: **Electronic Arts** DEVELOPER: **EA Canada** RELEASE: **September**

Thanks in part to its hockey-stick peripheral, NHL Slapshot may be the most approachable hockey game around. It doesn't matter if you're playing pro or peewee hockey—swinging a hockey stick is fun.

Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions

Wii PUBLISHER: **Activision** DEVELOPER: **Beenox** RELEASE: **September**

Shattered Dimensions looks to be the web-slinger's most ambitious game in years, spanning four different incarnations of the franchise, each with its own unique aesthetic and gameplay style.



Raving Rabbids Travel in Time

Wii PUBLISHER: **Ubisoft** DEVELOPER: **Ubisoft Paris** RELEASE: **Holiday**

With Travel in Time, the Raving Rabbids series returns to its multiplayer roots via 25 new chronologically themed minigames (some of which will support the Wii MotionPlus accessory). In a franchise first, up to four players will be able to compete online.

Sengoku Basara: Samurai Heroes

Wii PUBLISHER: **Capcom** DEVELOPER: **Capcom** RELEASE: **Fall**

Japanese history collides with manga-style action in Sengoku Basara: Samurai Heroes. The game features more than 15 playable characters, all inspired by Japanese historical figures, each with personalized special moves.

NHL 2K11

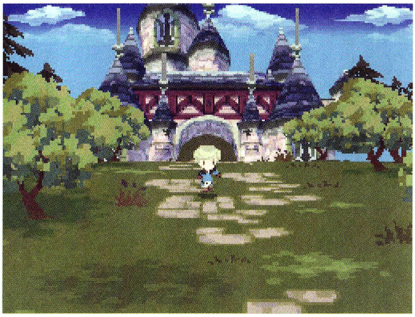
Wii PUBLISHER: **2K Sports** DEVELOPER: **Visual Concepts** RELEASE: **September**

In a somewhat surprising turn of events, this year's hockey game from 2K Sports will be a Wii exclusive, allowing the team at Visual Concepts to focus all its energy on making the best NHL game possible for Nintendo's console. A major part of that equation is the Wii MotionPlus accessory, which will allow for real-time, one-to-one stick handling.

Batman: The Brave and the Bold

Wii PUBLISHER: **Warner Bros. Interactive** DEVELOPER: **WayForward** RELEASE: **September**

Yes, Batman: The Brave and the Bold is based on the cartoon of the same name, but don't write it off as just another licensed cash-in. This side-scrolling title is reminiscent of the co-op beat-'em-ups of yore, only with a wide array of DC superheroes and spiffier graphics.



Final Fantasy: The 4 Heroes of Light

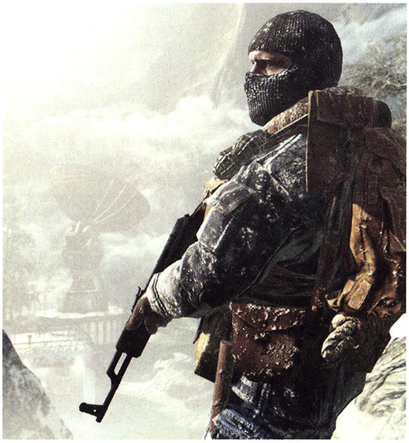
DS **PUBLISHER: Square Enix** **DEVELOPER: Matrix Software** **RELEASE: October**

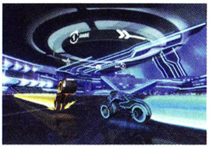
An intriguing mix of old and new, Final Fantasy: The 4 Heroes of Light features some of the most impressive graphics ever seen on the DS, but takes its game-design cues from classic RPGs of the NES era. Players can expect a straightforward, fast-paced, and challenging adventure free of the lengthy cut-scenes and go-here-next handholding of many modern-day games.

Call of Duty: Black Ops

Wii **PUBLISHER: Activision** **DEVELOPER: Treyarch** **RELEASE: November**

Unlike the Modern Warfare titles, Call of Duty: Black Ops is coming to Wii day-and-date with the other consoles. The game takes place during the Cold War and thrusts players into myriad covert operations across the globe. One moment you're infiltrating a Siberian base; the next you're hijacking a Soviet helicopter in the jungles of Vietnam.

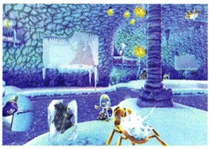




TRON: Evolution—Battle Grids

Wii **PUBLISHER: Disney Interactive** **DEVELOPER: n-Space** **RELEASE: Holiday**

Just in time for the *TRON: Legacy* film comes the Light Cycle-centric TRON: Evolution—Battle Grids. Holding the Wii Remote NES-style, you race and battle in a computerized world using the motorcycle-esque Light Cycles.



Flip's Twisted World

Wii **PUBLISHER: Majesco** **DEVELOPER: Frozen North** **RELEASE: September**

This ambitious platformer has been a long time coming, but it keeps getting better every time we see it. With elemental powers and the ability to turn the world upside down, Flip is a hero to be reckoned with.

Shaun White Skateboarding

Wii **PUBLISHER: Ubisoft** **DEVELOPER: Ubisoft Montreal** **RELEASE: September**

The flying tomato's skateboarding debut puts a new twist on the genre. As you pull off tricks and complete objectives, your surroundings literally transform. Not only do the drab cityscapes become more vibrant, but new skateable elements arise.

The Sims 3

Wii **PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts** **DEVELOPER: The Sims Studio** **RELEASE: October**

The Wii version of The Sims 3 isn't just a scaled-down port of the chart-smashing PC game. Among the new additions are Karma powers, which let you wreak a little havoc on your virtual peeps, and a game show-esque multiplayer mode.

Return of the Golden Age

You may know the name, but you don't know the game. After more than a decade, first-person shooter GoldenEye 007 gets reimagined for Wii.

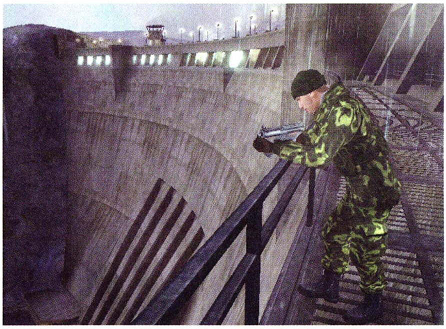
Wii PUBLISHER: **Activision**
DEVELOPER: **Eurocom**
RELEASE: **November**

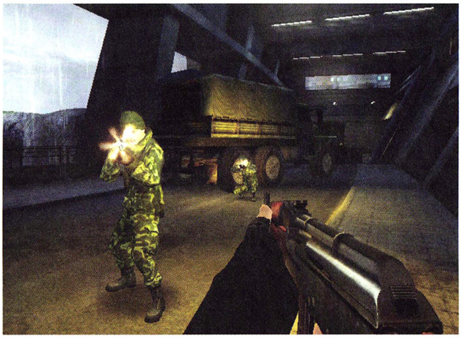
His name is Bond. James Bond. And among gamers, he's best known for starring in one of the best first-person shooters of all time: GoldenEye 007 for the Nintendo 64. Since that title's release in 1997, many James Bond video games have come and gone—unfortunately, none of them have shared GoldenEye's phenomenal success. But now publisher Activision is bringing back GoldenEye 007 and giving it a modern update.

Naturally, the graphics and controls have been overhauled (the game supports the Wii Remote-and-Nunchuk-controller combo, as well as the Classic and GameCube controllers), but there also have been several other changes. Bond himself is different, for example, with Pierce Brosnan being replaced by current Bond actor Daniel Craig. Craig provides the face and the voice, while his stunt double provides the motion capture. (Although Bond is different this time around, M is still being played by Dame Judi Dench.)

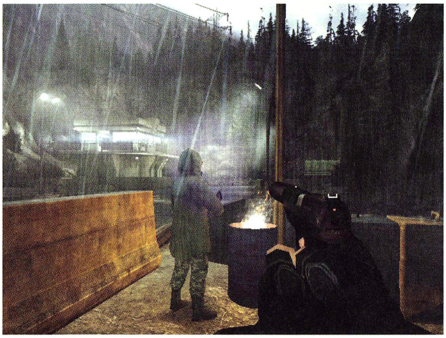
More importantly, though, the levels have been revamped to allow for multiple styles of play. For example, when you meet up with 006 (no longer portrayed by Sean Bean) at the Russian dam in the game's opening moments, you are given a choice as to how to deal with your enemies. You can stealthily sneak to your goal, or you can rush in with guns blazing. Either way works, though the latter is a good way to show off the game's environment-destruction capabilities. Loads of stuff can be destroyed, including cover, as the developers wanted to keep the action moving.

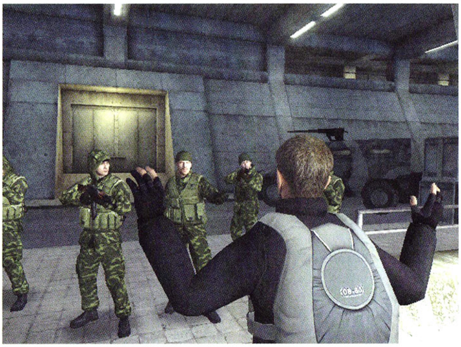
Although stealth comes in very handy, you're not just hiding all of the time; you can sneak up on foes





The first-person-shooter action should feel familiar [above], but this modernized version of GoldenEye 007 is much more cinematic [below].





Revealing Eye

We've seen only a small portion of GoldenEye 007, so producer Dawn Pinkney gave us the lowdown on what else we can expect from this remodeled James Bond adventure.

NINTENDO POWER How did this project come about, and why was now the right time to bring back GoldenEye 007 after all these years?

DAWN PINKNEY Ever since Activision acquired the Bond license, reimagining GoldenEye has been a regular topic of discussion. It's what fans of the original have been talking about for years, so we knew it was the right thing to do if we could find the right developer. Eurocom, who we'd recently worked with on Quantum of Solace, had the passion and capability to deliver a game deserving the title GoldenEye, and so the process of bringing a new GoldenEye game to consumers began.

What's been your approach to creating a follow-up to such a beloved classic? How are you making this game appeal to both fans of the original and people who have never played GoldenEye 007 before?

Our approach has been to respect all the magic elements from the original property, yet to evolve the experience to meet and exceed the expectations of today's first-person-shooter gamers—that is what the original interpretation did back in 1997, and what we have to live up to now. Everything we focus on in development is with the intention of being able to have a gaming experience that appeals to the core gamer, as well as bringing in people not only new to GoldenEye, but also new to shooter gaming in general.

We've also worked extremely hard to make sure the game is accessible to all players, and to this end have been looking very carefully at controls, difficulty levels, and how we deliver a fun and compelling experience.

How closely does the game follow the events of the movie? Which parts of the film's narrative—if any—did you want to make sure you included in this game?

Although the game follows the main plot from the movie, we've worked with the original film writer, Bruce Feirstein, to update it so that everything happens in real time and from Bond's perspective. For instance, Bond no longer views the EMP attack via satellite from MI6, but experiences a level-changing moment firsthand at Severnaya. Playing through a tranquil snowy environment to the sudden mayhem an EMP attack causes is amazing.

Also, as Valentin Zukovsky [who was originally portrayed by actor Robbie Coltrane] was such a loveable rogue in the film, we've now dedicated an entire level to him, except this time it's in a supercool club in Barcelona. Rob Cowper, the Hollywood set designer we've been working with, has brought an incredible architectural, design-led look to the club that gives it a fresh feel which we know is going to blow people away.

During the single-player demo, we saw an on-rails shooting segment with 006, Alec Trevelyan, driving a truck. Will that kind of thing be prevalent throughout the game to provide some extra variety?

The truck sequence with Alec was something we did because we thought it would be more meaningful—he betrays you, so we wanted to build the relationship between 006 and 007, as well as getting the game off to a dramatic start. This is specific to this level, and we have made other meaningful updates which are unique to the levels they appear in. For instance, we've updated the end of the Carrier level where you infiltrate the frigate to plant a tracker device on the helicopter, only this time we thought it would be more dramatic and fun to end the level with the helicopter chasing you through the frigate, tearing up the environment whilst firing at you until you leap off into the water at the end.

We've been careful to balance these cinematic updates expected in games today by keeping the player in control; therefore the truck sequence is not just a cinematic you sit back and watch—you have control of your viewpoint and an AK-47 to tear up the environment and cause mass destruction.

What's been the team's approach to creating the new multiplayer levels? What makes a great multiplayer map in your opinion?

Our approach has been to create great environments which support the action, whether it is free-for-all or team play. Each map we have is incredibly unique not only visually, but also with its environmental navigation and layout.

Being able to find the firefights quickly is important for our maps—the experience is fast-paced and we did not want players running around missing out on frags whilst their opponents are clocking up. However, we've also provided lots of little hiding spots for strategic advantage—whether it be a secret vent route in the Archives or navigating the lighting structure of the ceiling in Zukovsky's, you just need to get to know the new maps like the backs of your hands—long-term players will not be disappointed.

Are all the classic multiplayer modes and customization options returning? Are there any new multiplayer modes/customization options?

We have kept the customization options, but only for the split-screen experience. We wanted this to be really nostalgic, just like you used to play with your friends on the same console. There are hundreds of different combinations you can have, including headshots only [with no one able to play as shorter character] Oddjob. As well as classic multiplayer modes, such as Golden Gun, Paintball, and Melee Only, we've also added a lot of new ones, such as Rubber Grenades and Tag.

Adding to the fun, we have eight Classic Bond villains you can choose, including Scaramanga, Jaws, Oddjob, Blofeld, Rosa Klebb, and Baron Samedi.

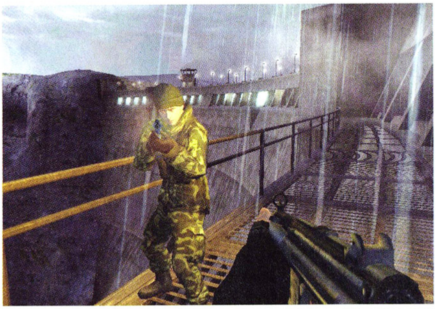
Can you tell us about the online play? Will you have to use friend codes, or can you play against anybody?

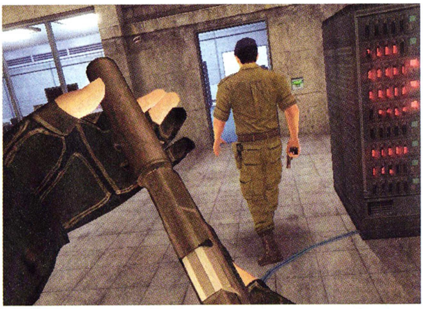
The online gameplay provides a more "core" experience to the split screen. You will develop your XP over time and unlock different weapons/spy perks. You can play against anybody but can also use friend codes to add your friends to the mix.

In addition to classic modes such as free-for-all and Golden Gun, we also have different objective modes available in online, such as GoldenEye Control—two teams vie for control of the GoldenEye satellite to set off an EMP attack on the enemy base.

Obviously, this game isn't being made by the same developer as the original. How do you reassure fans that the brand is in good hands?

Eurocom is one of the world's most experienced Nintendo developers, having been making games for Nintendo's platforms for most of their 22-year history, and they take their duty in upholding this classic very seriously indeed. All members of the team are huge fans of the franchise and have been developing Bond titles for years, so they know the license extremely well.



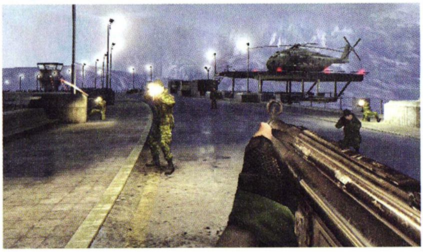


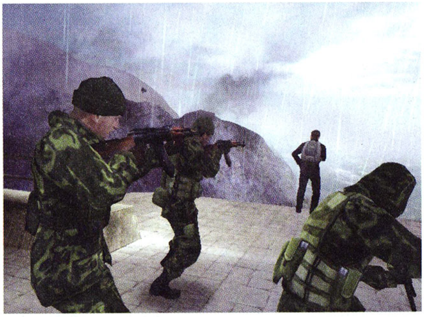
from behind and quietly subdue them by following the onscreen button prompts. You and 006 can also breach certain areas—time slows down as you storm into a room, allowing you to get the jump on your adversaries and prevent them from reaching the alarm. (OK, so shooting everything in sight is not exactly stealthy, but you do prevent reinforcements from being alerted.)

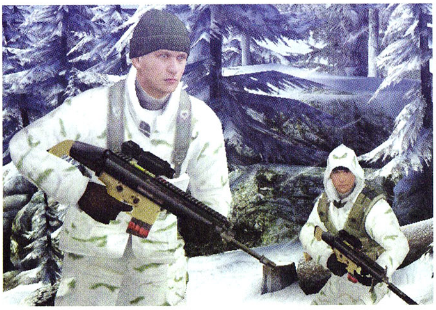
There is at least one point when stealth is not an option, though. When 006 commandeers a jeep, you shoot while he drives. Yes, this portion is on rails—developer Eurocom has some experience with this type of gameplay, having brought us Dead Space: Extraction—but it's appropriately cinematic.

As exciting as this reimagined single-player experience is, however, the big draw for many longtime fans is the multiplayer; it's the reason why the original GoldenEye 007 became a dorm-room staple, after all. Up to eight people can play online and up to four can compete offline via a split screen, choosing from nine modes and at least 40 characters (including fan favorites such as Jaws and Oddjob). In addition to brand-new maps, familiar multiplayer maps will return (Facility and Archives being two notable ones), though like everything else in this game, they have been redesigned.

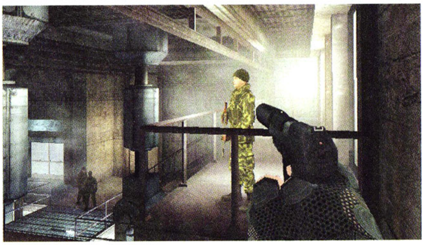
Based on what we've seen so far, the new GoldenEye 007 appears to be much more than just a cash-in on the GoldenEye name (we're looking at you, GoldenEye: Rogue Agent for GameCube), retaining much of what we adored about the N64 game while modernizing it. We have to wait only until November to find out whether this title can live up to the high standards set by the original. **—JUSTIN C.**







[Below] There are few things as satisfying as sneaking up on someone.



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NINTENDO POWER
RED STEEL 2
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The dynamic duo re-team for the Olympic Winter Games on Wii and DS
PUNCH-OUT!! BLOWOUT
Punch-Out
Wii
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BOOM BLOX: BASH PARTY
FIRE EMBLEM SHADOW DRAGON
MARIO & LUIGI RPG
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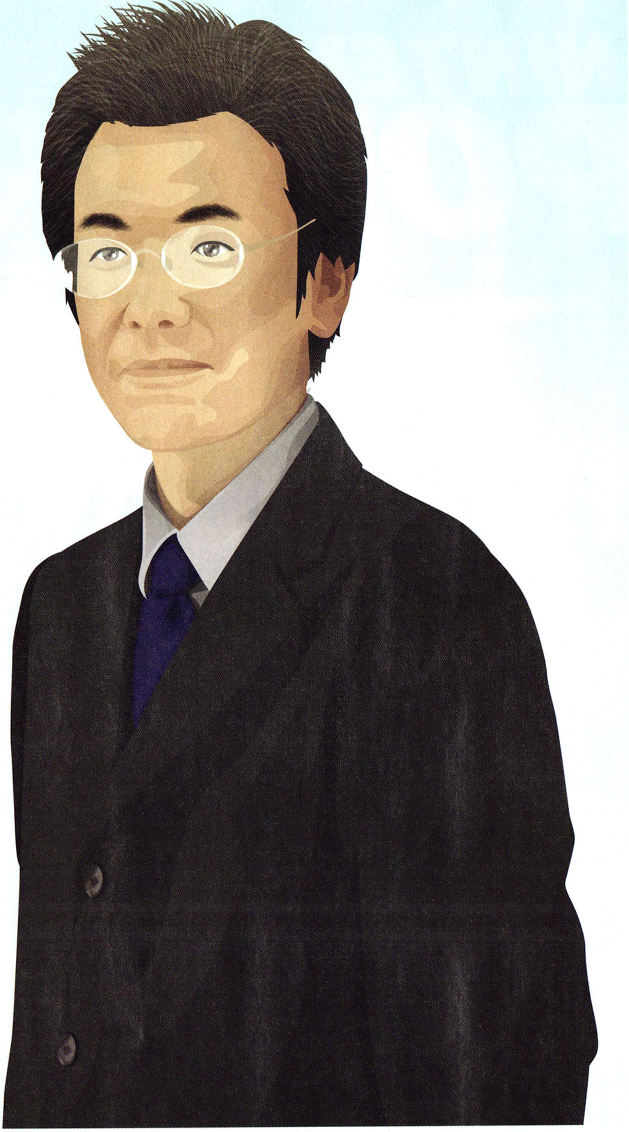
Power Profiles



DATE OF BIRTH
November 5, 1962

BIRTHPLACE
Oguni, Japan

POSITION
Executive producer, Square Enix

BEST KNOWN FOR
Experimenting with new ideas to shake up established franchises; helping Squaresoft and Nintendo get back together

FAVORITE FOOD
Udon

CURRENT PROJECTS
An unannounced RPG

Akitoshi Kawazu

ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTINA EMPEDOCLES

Having joined the company in 1985 (back when it was still called Squaresoft), Akitoshi Kawazu is regarded as one of Square Enix's elder statesmen. He worked alongside Hironobu Sakaguchi on the original Final Fantasy and went on to create both the SaGa and Crystal Chronicles franchises. These days he serves as an executive producer, most recently on Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: The Crystal Bearers. That title typifies the experimental spirit of Kawazu's work, which is an especially notable trait given his position at a publisher not exactly known for taking risks. Unlike many of his colleagues in software development, Kawazu is also an avid gamer, and his fervor for the medium shines through in conversation. His next project remains a secret for now, but you can bet it won't play things safe.

NINTENDO POWER
How did you originally get into the video game business?

AKITOSHI KAWAZU
Prompted by a friend, I started out working part-time as a writer for a game magazine. But of course, I had been playing computer games, such as those for the Apple II, previous to that. In college, I had a friend who was really into games who would import everything from board games to video games from America. That was a major influence.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to go into something tech-y or researching. I never really thought about a specific field. Video games didn't exist when I was small. There was also a time when I wanted to become a baseball player, just like other little boys.

How were you introduced to video games? What kinds of games did you play when you were younger?

The first game I ever played was Atari's Pong. I must have been around 14 then. Before that, I often played the board game Monopoly. Space Invaders was a big hit when I was in high school, and I poured a lot of hours into it. I always enjoyed shooters more than games like Pac-Man.

You are often credited with establishing the precedent of creating each Final Fantasy game anew, with no continuing worlds or storylines in common, and significantly different mechanics for each installment. What inspired that then-revolutionary decision?

It wasn't so much a personal decision as it was driven by the fact that the entire team had the mentality of wanting to challenge something new. Mr. [Hironobu] Sakaguchi, who was leading development on Final Fantasy II, had said himself, "there's no point in doing the same thing." That was intended to mean we should keep trying to create new things, but the other side to it was that he was not completely satisfied with the first Final Fantasy.

Also, because we had developed the first Final Fantasy, our skills had advanced significantly. So we felt that we could greatly improve the graphics, story, and game systems for our next project, and would be able to surprise and entertain players even more.

When Final Fantasy II was released, some people offered opinions like, "as long as you change the scenario for RPGs, you don't have to change the rest of the system." But I don't think that the Final Fantasy series would be where it is today if we had followed that advice.

Given all the different forms Final Fantasy has taken over the years, what do you consider the essence of the franchise? What makes a game a Final Fantasy title?

The Final Fantasy series has expanded to include a variety of spin-offs and even non-RPGs, so it's difficult to pick out one element that applies to everything across the board. One thing I can say is that Final Fantasy is a special series to us, so anyone who participates in its development feels a tremendous amount of pressure. I hope we never lose the sense of always trying to create something new, and taking on the toughest of challenges.

There is a wide variety of titles right now, so it might be a good time for us to really focus on the numbered titles, and ask ourselves once more what makes Final Fantasy what it is.

What is the origin of the name Final Fantasy?

It was something that was decided a long time ago, so my memory might be a bit faulty, but I think one of the things we had decided up front was that we wanted a title that could be abbreviated as FF. That abbreviation has special meaning. So we came up with many different titles, and Final Fantasy was one of them. From there, I think we were quick to make the call. There were some concerns about calling something "final" from the get-go, but in the end we all warmed up to it. On a side note, one other option we liked was Fighting Fantasy, but it was the name of a game-book series by legendary game designer Steve Jackson, so we canned the idea. I wonder what would have happened if we didn't realize this and went with the Fighting Fantasy option.

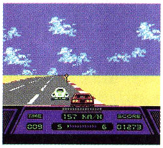
With the notable exception of Final Fantasy, it seems Japanese RPGs are having a more difficult time finding an audience in the West recently. Why do you think that is, and what can developers do to change that?

Aside from a few well-known titles, games from Japan are receiving less and less attention,

"It might be a good time for us to really focus on the numbered titles and ask... what makes Final Fantasy what it is."

GAMEOGRAPHY

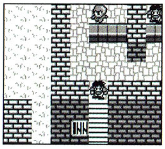
The first title Kawazu ever worked on was Rad Racer, an NES driving game best remembered for its inclusion of 3D glasses. Since then, both he and the rest of Square Enix have specialized primarily in role-playing games.



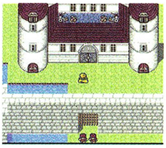
RAD RACER
1987, NES
RESULT DISPLAY DATA

BkM8
HP 586
F8tr
0
Thef
0
RedM
0
LICH
FIGHT
RUN
MAGIC
DRINK
ITEM

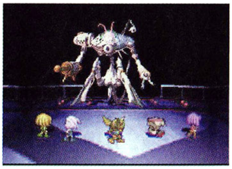
FINAL FANTASY
1990, NES
GAME DESIGN, SCENARIO



FINAL FANTASY LEGEND
1990, GAME BOY
DIRECTOR



ROMANCING SAGA
1992, SUPER FAMICOM
DIRECTOR



SAGA FRONTIER
1998, PLAYSTATION
DIRECTOR, PRODUCER

Power Profiles

regardless of if it is an RPG or not. I feel that it has something to do with the marketing abilities of Japanese publishers, as well as the games themselves.

The technology is not on par with Western games, and it also seems like developers are losing their passion to stick with their vision because they are being overwhelmed by costs or market trends. It's necessary for each individual developer to constantly be up-to-date with the latest computer and game technologies. It is also important for development teams and groups as a whole to support technological advancement. It is impossible for one person to keep up with all the skills necessary for game development on his own. On top of this, developers need to take on a project with the confidence and strength to stick with their vision. Everything I mentioned here applies to me personally, as well, and they are all things I would like to bring to fruition with my next project.

We've seen a couple of follow-ups to Final Fantasy Tactics that took on a decidedly lighter tone than the original. What was the driving force behind that? And would you one day like to return that series to its more serious roots?
We went with the lighter tone so that it would be easier for more players to relate to. Your question has a very good point. If given the opportunity, I would love to produce a new Final Fantasy Tactics with a more serious tone.

Turn-based battle systems have become increasingly rare in modern RPGs. Why do you think that is?
[Turn-based] projects are not green-lit because of the assessment that turn-based RPGs are not received well overseas. I personally love both styles, whether it's thoroughly thinking through each move in a turn-based game or playing the modern real-time games. They provide different forms of entertainment.

It seems like The Crystal Bearers went through a number of significant changes over the course of its development. How did you and the team finally come to the fairly radical ideas that formed the end product?
The goal of The Crystal Bearers was for players to become the hero. We wanted to realize this without tying ourselves to a specific game style. We designed the game to highlight the superhuman aspects of the main character, and arrived at the end product through a series of play tests. As a result, I think the gameplay experience itself is very different from the norm. Perhaps it was a bit too radical.

> *"It also seems like developers are losing their passion to stick with their vision because they are being overwhelmed by costs or market trends."*

What aspect of creating a video game do you enjoy the most?
Nothing compares to the feeling of planning something, actually playing it, and finding that it's been crafted just the way I envisioned it. It's even better if I see others playing and having fun with it.

If you weren't making games, what do you think you'd be doing?
When I first started, I had planned to quit in three years or after three projects. My objective was to convey a story through games, so I had planned to try my hand at some other form of storytelling, like novels or movies.

What other games or game creators do you most admire or respect?
As one that is mainly involved in RPG projects, I can't go without mentioning Lord British. If not for Ultima IV, I don't think I would have chosen the RPG genre as a medium for storytelling. A real world and real people existed within that game.

Whose works in other forms of media, such as film or literature, do you most admire or enjoy?
As with many others of my generation, *Star Wars* holds a special place in my heart. Before the movie premiered in Japan, I read a magazine featuring *Star Wars*. Within that article, the Apple II version of Star Trek was introduced. That's when I was first exposed to the existence of Apple II, and was very moved by the fact that the world of sci-fi was already a reality in the States. This is when I started to have a strong interest in computers.

As for fantasy novels, I love Tanith Lee's works. They are very mystic, in a sense, and I very much enjoy the unique worlds she creates. I have used some of her characters' names for the characters in my projects. It would be wonderful if I could create a world with that sort of atmosphere in my games as well.

What is your favorite hobby or pastime?
Games, of course! My favorite genre is actually war simulation, but it's difficult to find people to play with. I'm also a big fan of watching sports. I love watching any kind of sport. I also love hot springs.

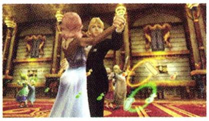
If you could have one superpower, what would it be?
This is a difficult question. I loved the superpowers in the *Perry Rhodan* series I used to read, so it's hard to choose just one. I really liked the Japanese character named Wuriu Sengu. He had a great personality. His superpower was to see through things. Not that I have a desire to see through anything!

GAMEOGRAPHY

FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES
2004, GAMECUBE
PRODUCER

FINAL FANTASY XII: REVENANT WINGS
2007, NINTENDO DS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS A2: GRIMOIRE OF THE RIFT
2008, NINTENDO DS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES: THE CRYSTAL BEARERS
2009, Wii
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Are you playing to your full potential?
Build your skills now at:
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Massive blips
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Get a Competitive Edge
Arm yourself with the latest tips,
tools and strategies from around the web

More Knowledge, More Power
One-stop access to up-to-date information
from expert sites, large and small

Share, Debate, Discuss
Expand your skills in a community
of serious MMO fanatics like you

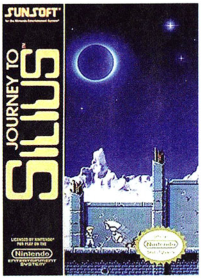
MassiveBlips.com
Community-driven MMO news and information.

Part of the DailyRadar Network. www.dailyradar.com

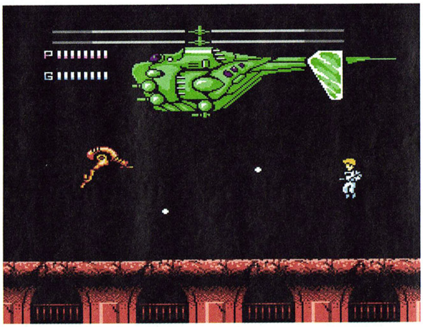
I was emo... before it was cool.

Journey to Silius

The solar system, not the tiny Italian town



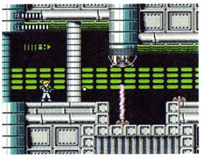
PLATFORM: **NES**
PUBLISHER: **SUNSOFT**
DEVELOPER: **SUNSOFT**
RELEASE DATE: **SEPTEMBER 1990**
COVERED IN ISSUES: **12, 21**
SET IN SPACE AGE: **0373**



Any good terrorist organization knows that helicopters are useless if they don't spit out giant, hopping robots.

One of the worst-kept secrets of the NES era is that Sunsoft's Journey to Silius was originally intended to be based on James Cameron's original *Terminator* film. At some point during the development process, however, Sunsoft lost the license to the movie. No worries, though—just alter a few graphics, tack on a new story, and you've got a license-free game that's good to go.

Of course, the story does sort of seem like it was thought up at the last minute. You play as Jay, the son of a scientist who's developing an orbiting space colony. Jay's dad is killed in an "accidental" nuclear explosion that was really the work of space-colony-hating terrorists. Jay soon finds a disc containing the plans for the colony and a message from his father. This sends our hero off on his quest to complete the colony and defeat the terrorists. That seems like an awful lot to ask of your son, even as a dying wish.



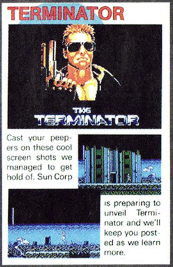
Story aside, Journey to Silius is pretty good. Considering that Sunsoft was making some fantastic NES titles at the time, this isn't terribly surprising. The gameplay is very similar to other action-platformers of the era. With only the ability to run, jump, and shoot, Jay doesn't have a wide variety of moves. The poor guy can't even fire upward. Luckily, he can earn a few new weapons throughout his adventure, à la Mega Man.

These new weapons, unfortunately, have limited ammo. Unlike in the Mega Man series, the special weapons all share the same energy meter. So if you use up all the weapon power firing homing missiles, your shotgun and laser rifle are also useless. Harsh. Energy capsules aren't as common as you'd like, either, so save those weapons for the boss encounters.

Is Journey to Silius a forgotten NES classic? Many gamers think so. It can be a bit cheap with its enemy placement at times and it's a tad on the short side, but it's still a solid action title. Give it a go if you're up for a mildly obscure good time. **—PHIL T.**

TERMINATED

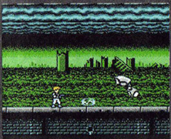
How would Journey to Slius have turned out if Sunsoft hadn't lost the *Terminator* license? This preview from Nintendo Power Vol. 7 gives us some indication.



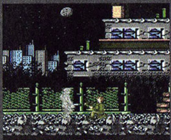
TERMINATOR

Cast your peepers on these cool screen shots we managed to get hold of. Sun Corp is preparing to unveil Terminator and we'll keep you posted as we learn more.

But even without the *Terminator* name, the game's licensed roots peek through on occasion. This is especially true where the enemies are concerned; one of the bosses clearly used to be a Skynet Hunter Killer Tank, and minor enemies reek of the T-800. Heck, we'd even say that Silius's post-apocalyptic backgrounds look more Terminator-y than the ones in Mindscape's Terminator game (released for the NES in 1992).



JOURNEY TO SILIUS (Sunsoft)



THE TERMINATOR (Mindscape)

HAVE A FAVORITE CLASSIC GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REVISITED?
Send us your requests—we'll consider them for a future installment of Playback. nintendopower@futureus.com

REVIEWS

IN-DEPTH REVIEWS OF ALL THE LATEST GAMES

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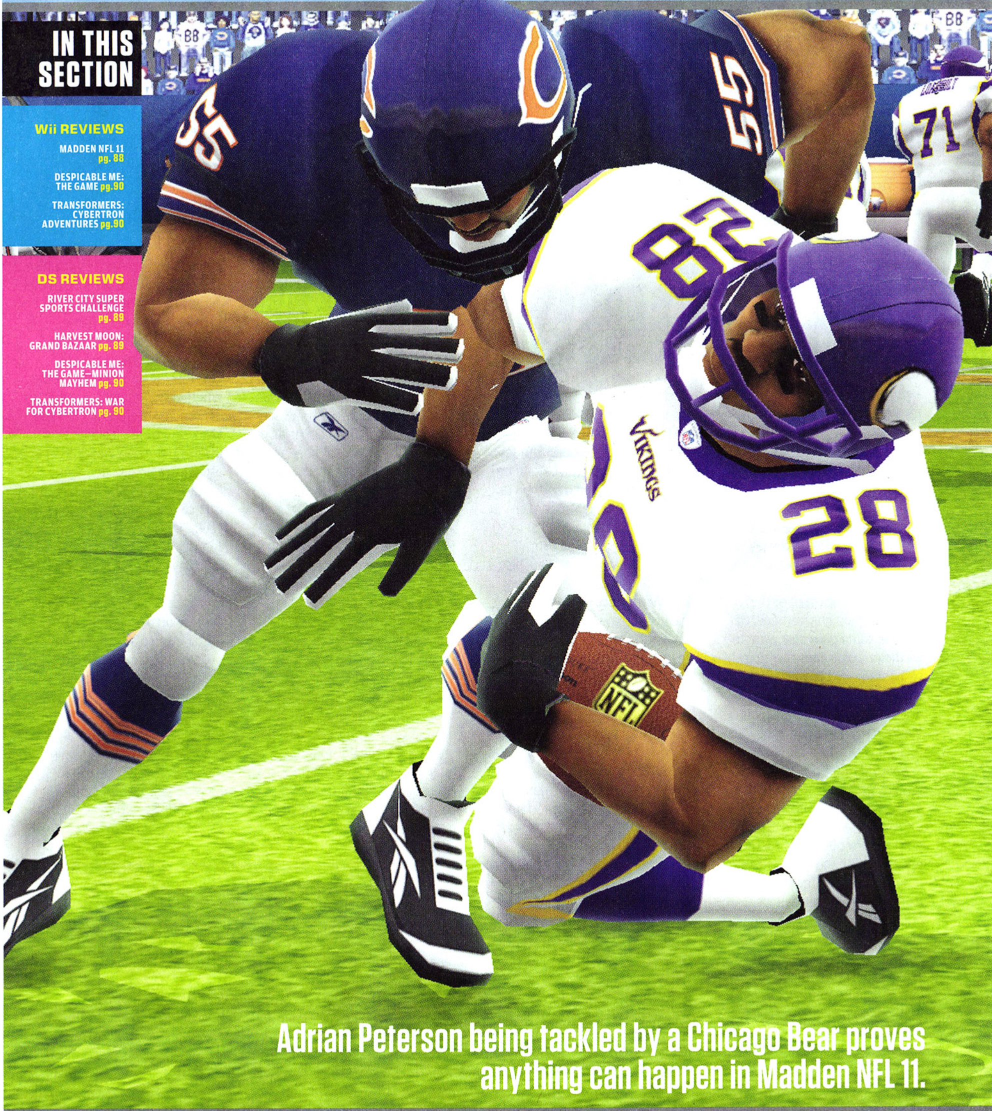
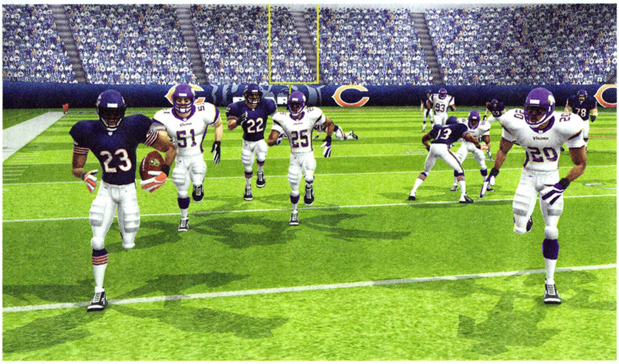
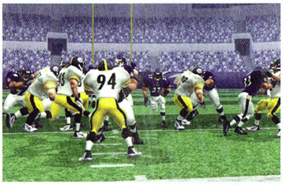


Adrian Peterson being tackled by a Chicago Bear proves anything can happen in Madden NFL 11.





Franchise Player

MADDEN NFL 11

RATING: 8.5

PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **ELECTRONIC ARTS**
DEVELOPER: **EA TIBURON**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

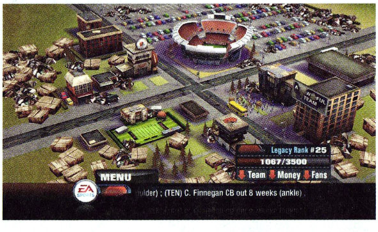
Fantasy fulfillment is a big part of the appeal when it comes to video games. We all want to be the hero who saves the princess, the next big rock star, or the championship quarterback. Of course, some of us also want to be the guy who cans the quarterback due to his outrageous contract demands. Those folks are the intended audience for Madden NFL 11 and its renewed focus on Franchise mode.

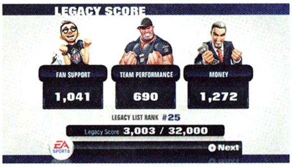
Last year that particular component was banished from the main menu, accessible only via a secret pass code, and offered nothing new outside of roster updates. With this year's installment not only is Franchise mode front and center once more, but the folks at EA Tiburon have given it a substantial overhaul. The menu-driven interface of seasons past has been replaced by a new point-and-click campus that looks a bit like something out of SimCity. The result feels a lot more user-friendly, and visual representations of your success—from private helicopters to gold-plated buildings—provide a stronger sense of satisfaction. You also have advisors who set concrete goals at the beginning of a season and who ask you to settle certain dilemmas each week. These scenarios can be pretty goofy, and the overall approach to this new Franchise mode feels very video game-y, which may turn off some hardcore purists. But none of it comes at the expense of depth; in fact, I can't think of a single option that's missing. The point is to bridge the knowledge gap and make things accessible to a broader audience without watering down the experience. On that front, Tiburon has done a fine job. Wannabe general managers who prefer a more serious framework will be better served by the versions of the game available for other consoles, however.

On the field, the action is as rock-solid as always. There are tons of options to accommodate all skill levels, the AI performs admirably for the most part, and I continue to be a fan of the pointer-based passing controls. New for this season is a feature called Gameflow, which chooses all of your plays for you. It bypasses the play-call screen entirely, illustrating routes and assignments on the field with semitransparent overlays as you approach the line of scrimmage. As a result, game times are cut dramatically—you'll get realistic stats with just eight-minute quarters. The play selections are a bit suspect at times, but you can always call an audible or opt out of the feature entirely and pick your own plays. It's just nice having the option to move things along at a brisker pace.

As with last year's game, player models and stadiums are slightly exaggerated to give them an arcade-style look. Whether that appeals is a matter of personal preference, but the visuals impress on a technical level and the new weather effects are unquestionably fantastic. Sadly, the commentary isn't so praiseworthy, despite the seemingly inspired choice of Gus Johnson for play-by-play. The typically excitable announcer sounds strangely reserved here, and both he and color man Cris Collinsworth repeat the same lines far too often.

That shortcoming aside, this is the best version of Madden on the Wii console to date. It offers all the depth and authenticity for which the series is known, but makes it more easily digestible. Now if you'll excuse me, I have an important contract negotiation to attend to with a Mr. Favre. **—STEVE T.**





[Left] If your franchise is struggling, maybe you can find a hobo to play left tackle.

WRITERS' BLOCK

WHICH NINTENDO 3DS GAME ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?

JUSTIN CHENG

Metal Gear Solid: Snake Eater 3D. I've had the theme song stuck in my head ever since I saw the demo.

CHRIS HOFFMAN

I'm gonna agree with Justin and pick Metal Gear. Before I came to Nintendo Power, I awarded the original Snake Eater a perfect score—the only one I've ever given—so I'm thrilled to see it on Nintendo 3DS.

NATHAN MEUNIER

I've had a hankering to return to the cuteness grind of Animal Crossing, so I'm anxious to see what the Nintendo 3DS version brings to the series.

CHRIS SLATE

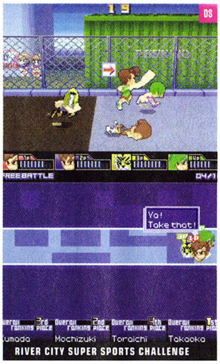
After waiting almost 20 years for a new sequel, how can I not pick Kid Icarus: Uprising? It's being made by the guy who created Kirby and Super Smash Bros., for goodness' sake!

DAVID F. SMITH

It may be cliché, but you can usually rely on The Legend of Zelda to be the best thing on a new Nintendo system.

STEVE THOMASON

The trailer for Resident Evil Revelations left us with all sorts of questions. Who's the mystery man tied to the chair? Why are Chris and Jill pointing guns at each other? How are those visuals even possible on a handheld? I want answers!


DS
FREE BATTLE
Yo!
Take that!
Overall 3rd ranking place
Overall 2nd ranking place
Overall 4th ranking place
Overall 1st ranking place
Kumada
Mochizuki
Toraichi
Takaoka

RIVER CITY SUPER SPORTS CHALLENGE

RIVER CITY SUPER SPORTS CHALLENGE

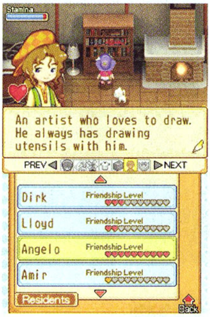
RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **AKSYS GAMES**
DEVELOPER: **MILLION**
ESRB: **TEEN**

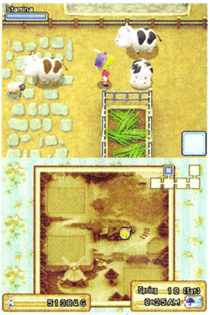
Imagine Super Smash Bros. at the Olympic Games and you'll have an idea of what this is about. (Or you could imagine the NES cult classic Crash 'n' the Boys Street Challenge, if you're on the shady side of 30-odd years old.) It's part track-and-field race and part 3D slugfest, which isn't a bad combination, and this remake preserves the charm of Technos Japan's big-headed 8-bit heroes.

The controls can be a little inconsistent, and so can the way the game judges who's leading a competition. In the two race-oriented modes (Cross Country and Obstacle Room), each course is broken up into a series of screens or rooms, and while whoever makes it out of a room first theoretically keeps that lead going into the next area, in practice the trailing racers seem to get a lot of help. Of course, that's not so big a problem if *you're* the one falling behind.

There's less substance to the two combat-focused modes, but it's still fun to top off a tournament with a simple four-way brawl, and a variety of course lengths and styles keeps the racing fresh. From their porch at the River City retirement home, we're sure Crash and the boys would approve. —**DAVID S.**



An artist who loves to draw. He always has drawing utensils with him.



Waning Gibbous

HARVEST MOON: GRAND BAZAAR

RATING: 6.0

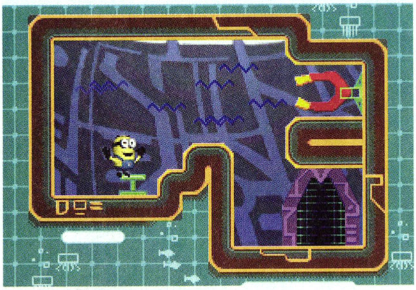
PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **NATSUME**
DEVELOPER: **MARVELOUS INTERACTIVE**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

Although it's the fifth Harvest Moon title for the Nintendo DS system, not much has changed in Harvest Moon: Grand Bazaar. You probably know the drill by now: build a farmhouse, raise crops and livestock, find someone in town to marry, and start a family. In addition to agricultural duties, each game always has an extra twist that adds to the basic farming plot, such as restoring the sunken archipelago in Harvest Moon: Sunshine Islands. Grand Bazaar feels like a step back for the series, though, since the main attraction—the titular bazaar—offers little in the way of new gameplay.

As usual, a swift in-game clock dictates your schedule, as you spend your days cultivating season-specific crops, taking care of your animals, and attending town festivals when they appear on your calendar. Once an in-game week, your town hosts a bazaar where the residents sell various wares. To operate your storefront, all you do is select which items you want to sell, then hit A multiple times to fill customer orders. Occasionally a character will approach your stand to chat, usually to ask for a handout or a discount, and you can either agree or deny (agreeing generally boosts your store's reputation). That's all there is to it. The town mayor sets sales goals each week, which helps keep you motivated to improve your crops and produce items, but the bazaar minigame itself is far too simplistic to be a noteworthy addition.

Enrique
Welcome to Enrique's Amazing Animal Stand!

If you've never played a Harvest Moon game before, Grand Bazaar is worth checking out—it's a solid farm/life sim with plenty to do, and the bazaar takes up so little of your time that it won't matter that there's not much to it. To anyone who's played any of the previous games though, this bucolic story will seem way too familiar. —**CAROLYN G.**



March of the Minions

DESPICABLE ME: THE GAME—MINION MAYHEM

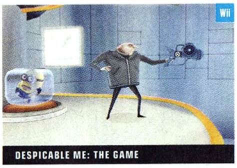
RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **D3PUBLISHER**
DEVELOPER: **WAYFORWARD**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

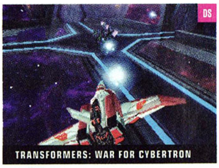
In stark contrast to its Wii counterpart, the handheld version of Despicable Me is an enjoyable experience all around. Minion Mayhem stretches beyond the confines of the animated film's plot to focus on a separate tale involving the wacky supervillain Gru, his coverall-wearing henchmen, and a new scheme hatched by his archnemesis Vector. It's a completely different game from the Wii version, and it manages to avoid many of the frustrations that hamper the console title.

The action-platforming element has been cut out completely from Minion Mayhem, which features more-deliberate, slower-paced puzzle-solving gameplay that's akin to Mario vs. Donkey Kong 2: March of the Minis. Each stage tasks you with safely leading your head minion through a dangerous obstacle course to collect multiple items and return to the exit in one piece before time runs out. Special unlockable support minions help in different ways by destroying walls, punching out enemies, freezing pools of water, and even inflating to hit airborne switches. Although you can't directly control your minions once they've been set in motion, stylus taps on springs, buttons, and other elements of the environment let you influence their path throughout the level.

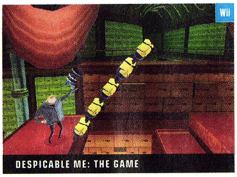
Figuring out how to get everyone where they need to go within the allotted time makes for some good tricky fun. The challenges do gradually ramp up as you get deeper into the game, but not in an irritating way. Though it's not as stellar as other, higher-profile puzzle games featuring the same mechanics, Minion Mayhem does a decent job of building on the core gameplay in a way that'll be entertaining to the film's audience. **—NATHAN M.**



DESPICABLE ME: THE GAME



TRANSFORMERS: WAR FOR CYBERTRON



DESPICABLE ME: THE GAME

TRANSFORMERS: CYBERTRON ADVENTURES

DESPICABLE ME: THE GAME

RATING: 4.0

PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **D3PUBLISHER**
DEVELOPER: **MONKEY BAR GAMES**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

Despicable Me's colorful mix of action-platforming and puzzle solving shows promise early on. Unfortunately, all of the goofy personality of this movie tie-in is quickly trampled by irritating level designs and an inconsistent difficulty curve. The wicked protagonist Gru has some cool weapons to use, including ice, air, web, and magnet gun attachments, and each lets you interact with your stackable minions in clever ways to overcome environment puzzles. However, many of the platforming portions are simply too unforgiving for the target audience, and the puzzles themselves waffle between being too easy and too punishing. Being a despicable supervillain for a change could have been a lot of fun, but sadly, it ends up being a real drag. **—NATHAN M.**

TRANSFORMERS: WAR FOR CYBERTRON

RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**
DEVELOPER: **VICARIOUS VISIONS**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

The latest handheld game starring the robots in disguise isn't a movie tie-in, but is a surprisingly good third-person action game. Whether you opt to battle as the Autobots or the Decepticons (there's a version of the game for each side), you'll be treated to intense action that actually requires some strategy, be it figuring out which type of weapon—solid, plasma or laser—works best against different enemies, or which Transformer is best suited to a particular situation. Plus, you can switch between two characters on the fly, which is useful in both level-based puzzles and combat. From its voice acting to its boss battles, War for Cybertron is totally for the fans—but it will also satisfy anyone who wants a good action game on the go. **—RANDY N.**

TRANSFORMERS: CYBERTRON ADVENTURES

RATING: 5.0

PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**
DEVELOPER: **NEXT LEVEL GAMES**
ESRB: **TEEN**

Transformers toys are cool because you're in control of what they do. Flip some panels, move some pieces, and—voilà!—you've turned a car into a robot warrior. If that process were automatic, it wouldn't be much fun. Along those same lines, Transformers: Cybertron Adventures is lacking because there's not much you get to actually control. It's basically an on-rails shooter; the game decides what character you play as, when you transform, and where your character goes (except for limited freedom of movement in the vehicle segments). All you get to do is choose where to aim, what weapon to fire, and when to take cover. It's not bad, but it sure is simple. Despite the title, there's no adventuring to be found, and the story is surprisingly weak. **—CHRIS H.**

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REVIEWS ARCHIVE

THE COMPLETE LIST OF NINTENDO POWER REVIEWS FROM THE PAST YEAR

SCORES REFLECT INDIVIDUAL REVIEWERS' OPINIONS

Wii

TITLE	SCORE	PUBLISHER	VOL.	ESRB
2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa	6.5	Electronic Arts	254	E
Academy of Champions: Soccer	6.5	Ubisoft	248	E
All Star Karate	7.0	THQ	255	E10+
Arc Rise Fantasia	7.5	Ignition	256	T
Astro Boy: The Video Game	7.5	D3Publisher	248	E10+
Attack of the Movies 3D	4.0	Majesco	255	T
Avatar: The Game	5.0	Ubisoft	250	T
The Beatles: Rock Band	9.0	MTV Games	247	T
The Bigs 2	6.0	2K Sports	244	E10+
A Boy and His Blob	8.5	Majesco	247	E
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: Reflex	9.0	Activision	249	M
Calling	5.0	Hudson	253	T
Cursed Mountain	7.0	Deep Silver	246	M
Dance Dance Revolution: Hottest Party 3	6.5	Konami	248	E10+
Data East Arcade Classics	6.5	Majesco	252	T
Dead Space Extraction	8.0	Electronic Arts	247	M
DiRT 2	4.5	Codemasters	247	E10+
DJ Hero	8.5	Activision	249	T
Dragon Ball: Revenge of King Piccolo	6.5	Namco Bandai	248	E10+
Drawn to Life: The Next Chapter	7.0	THQ	248	E
Endless Ocean: Blue World	7.5	Nintendo	252	E10+
Family Fun Football	4.5	Tecmo	247	E
FIFA Soccer 10	6.0	Electronic Arts	248	E
Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: The Crystal Bearers	8.0	Square Enix	250	T
Fragile Dreams: Farewell Ruins of the Moon	5.5	XSEED	253	T
G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra	5.0	Electronic Arts	246	T
Green Day: Rock Band	8.0	MTV	256	T
Guitar Hero 5	8.0	Activision	247	T
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince	5.5	Electronic Arts	244	E10+
Harvest Moon: Animal Parade	7.5	Natsume	248	E
Iron Man 2	4.0	Sega	256	T
Jambo! Safari	3.5	Sega	250	E
Ju-On: The Grudge	6.0	XSEED	247	M
Karaoke Revolution	6.0	Konami	248	T
The Last Airbender	6.0	THQ	257	T
LEGO Harry Potter: Years 1-4	7.5	Warner Bros.	257	E10+
LEGO Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues	6.5	LucasArts	249	E10+
LEGO Rock Band	8.0	Warner Bros.	249	E10+
Little King's Story	9.0	XSEED	244	T
Madden NFL 10	8.0	Electronic Arts	245	E
Major League Baseball 2K10	7.0	2K Sports	253	E
Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Winter Games	7.0	Sega	247	E
Marvel Ultimate Alliance 2	5.5	Activision	248	T
Mini Ninjas	7.5	Eidos	247	E10+
Monster Hunter Tri	9.0	Capcom	254	T
Muramasa: The Demon Blade	8.0	Ignition	246	T
MySims Agents	7.0	Electronic Arts	247	E
Naruto Shippuden: Clash of Ninja Revolution 3	7.5	Tomy	249	T
NBA 2K10	6.0	2K Sports	247	E
Need for Speed Nitro	7.0	Electronic Arts	249	E10+
New Super Mario Bros. Wii	9.0	Nintendo	249	E
NHL 2K10	8.0	2K Sports	246	E10+
No More Heroes 2: Desperate Struggle	9.0	Ubisoft	252	M
Overlord: Dark Legend	7.0	Codemasters	244	T
Pinball Hall of Fame: The Gottlieb Collection	6.5	Crave	251	E
Pirates Plundarrr	4.0	Majesco	255	E10+
Prince of Persia: The Forgotten Sands	8.0	Ubisoft	255	T
Pro Evolution Soccer 2010	8.0	Konami	250	E
Rabbids Go Home	7.0	Ubisoft	249	E10+
Racquet Sports	6.5	Ubisoft	253	E
Red Steel 2	8.0	Ubisoft	254	T
Resident Evil: The Darkside Chronicles	8.0	Capcom	249	M
Sakura Wars: So Long, My Love	7.5	NIS America	253	T
Sam & Max: Beyond Time and Space	8.0	Atari	255	T
Shaun White Snowboarding: World Stage	7.0	Ubisoft	249	E
Shiren the Wanderer	6.5	Atlus	252	T
Silent Hill: Shattered Memories	8.0	Konami	249	M
SimAnimals Africa	5.0	Electronic Arts	248	E
Sin and Punishment: Star Successor	9.0	Nintendo	257	T
The Sky Crawlers: Innocent Aces	7.0	XSEED	250	T
Sonic & Sega All-Stars Racing	8.0	Sega	252	E
Spectrobes: Origins	5.5	Disney	246	E10+
Spore Hero	7.0	Electronic Arts	247	E10+
Spyborgs	7.5	Capcom	247	T
Star Wars The Clone Wars: Republic Heroes	5.0	LucasArts	249	T
Super Mario Galaxy 2	9.5	Nintendo	256	E
Super Monkey Ball Step & Roll	5.5	Sega	252	E
Tatsunoko vs. Capcom: Ultimate All-Stars	9.0	Capcom	251	T
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Smash-Up	7.5	Ubisoft	247	E10+
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 11	9.0	Electronic Arts	256	E
Tornado Outbreak	6.5	Konami	247	E10+
Tournament of Legends	7.0	Sega	257	T
Toy Story 3: The Video Game	7.5	Disney	257	E10+
Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen	5.5	Activision	245	T
Trauma Team	8.0	Atlus	255	T
Valhalla Knights: Eldar Saga	4.0	XSEED	246	T
Virtua Tennis 2009	7.0	Sega	244	E
Wii Sports Resort	8.5	Nintendo	245	E
WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2010	7.5	THQ	248	T

MORE ON:

SIN AND PUNISHMENT: STAR SUCCESSOR

Having never played the original Japanese Sin and Punishment for N64, I was eager to see why everyone raves about this series. The relentless action is pretty incredible; I especially enjoy the feeling of aiming my Wii Remote controller to shoot. It's too bad that the story scenes are so awful. A nonsensical plot and oddly stubby characters get in the way of blistering fun. —**CHRIS S.**

BOSS
SCORE
5,715
MULTIPLIER
x00

MORE ON:

TOURNAMENT OF LEGENDS

It's not about to join Street Fighter and Soulcalibur in the fighting game Hall of Fame, but Tournament of Legends is a fun, goofy brawler. Its character roster boasts some nice diversity, and I love the arena-specific monster hazards. Plus, the price is right at $29.99. —**STEVE T.**

Nintendo DS

TITLE	SCORE	PUBLISHER	VOL.	ESRB
Ace Attorney Investigations: Miles Edgeworth	8.0	Capcom	252	T
Again	7.0	Tecmo Koei	253	T
Ant Nation	2.0	Konami	245	E
Assassin's Creed II: Discovery	7.0	Ubisoft	250	T
Atelier Annie: Alchemists of Sera Island	8.0	NIS America	248	E10+
Avatar: The Game	5.0	Ubisoft	250	E10+
Beat City	8.5	THQ	254	E
Bejeweled Twist	8.5	PopCap	251	E
Bleach: The 3rd Phantom	4.0	Sega	246	T
Blue Dragon: Awakened Shadow	7.5	D3Publisher	256	E10+
Bookworm DS	8.5	PopCap	249	E
Cooking Mama 3: Shop & Chop	6.0	Majesco	248	E
C.O.P. The Recruit	4.0	Ubisoft	249	T
Crime Scene	5.0	SouthPeak	253	M
Dawn of Discovery	8.5	Ubisoft	244	E
Dawn of Heroes	7.5	Majesco	253	E10+
Deca Sports DS	5.5	Hudson	253	E
Dementium II	8.0	SouthPeak	255	M
Dragon Ball: Origins 2	8.0	Namco Bandai	256	T
Dragon Ball Z: Attack of the Saiyans	8.0	Namco Bandai	248	E10+
Dragon Quest IX: Sentinels of the Starry Skies	9.0	Nintendo	257	E10+
Drawn to Life: The Next Chapter	8.0	THQ	248	E
Fighting Fantasy: The Warlock of Firetop Mountain	4.0	Aspyr	248	T
Fossil Fighters	8.0	Nintendo	246	E
G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra	5.0	Electronic Arts	245	E10+
Glory of Heracles	7.0	Nintendo	251	E10+
Guitar Hero On Tour: Modern Hits	7.0	Activision	244	E10+
Harvest Moon: Sunshine Islands	7.0	Natsume	248	E
Hero's Saga: Laevatein Tactics	7.0	Aksys	247	T
IL-2 Sturmovik: Birds of Prey	4.0	505	246	E10+
Infinite Space	8.0	Sega	253	T
Iron Man 2	6.5	Sega	256	E10+
Kingdom Hearts 358/2 Days	9.0	Square Enix	247	E10+
The Last Airbender	7.5	THQ	257	E10+
The Legend of Zelda: Spirit Tracks	9.5	Nintendo	250	E10+
LEGO Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues	5.0	LucasArts	249	E10+
Mario & Luigi: Bowser's Inside Story	9.5	Nintendo	246	E
Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Winter Games	8.0	Sega	247	E
Mega Man Star Force 3: Red Joker/Black Ace	6.0	Capcom	244	E
Mega Man Zero Collection	**9.0**	**Capcom**	**256**	**E**
Might & Magic: Clash of Heroes	8.5	Ubisoft	247	E10+
Mini Ninjas	6.0	Eidos	247	E10+
Naruto Shippuden: Ninja Destiny 2	7.0	Tomy	247	T
Nostalgia	7.0	Ignition	248	E10+
Overlord Minions	7.0	Codemasters	244	E10+
Phantasy Star 0	8.0	Sega	248	E10+
Picross 3D	7.5	Nintendo	255	E
Pokémon HeartGold Version	9.5	Nintendo	253	E
Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Explorers of Sky	8.0	Nintendo	248	E
Pokémon SoulSilver Version	9.5	Nintendo	253	E
Professor Layton and the Diabolical Box	8.0	Nintendo	246	E10+
Puzzle Quest 2	**7.5**	**D3Publisher**	**257**	**E10+**
Rabbids Go Home	7.0	Ubisoft	249	E
Ragnarok DS	5.0	XSEED	252	E10+
River City Soccer Hooligans	7.0	Aksys	256	T
Rooms: The Main Building	7.0	Hudson	253	E
Sands of Destruction	7.0	Sega	250	T
Scribblenauts	9.0	Warner Bros.	247	E10+
Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Survivor	8.0	Atlus	244	T
Shin Megami Tensei: Strange Journey	8.0	Atlus	253	M
Sonic & Sega All-Stars Racing	6.0	Sega	252	E
Sonic Classic Collection	7.0	Sega	253	E
Space Bust-A-Move	7.0	Taito	245	E
Space Invaders Extreme 2	8.0	Square Enix	248	E
Spore Hero Arena	5.0	Electronic Arts	247	E
Squishy Tank	8.0	Natsume	253	E
Star Wars Battlefront: Elite Squadron	5.5	LucasArts	249	E10+
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Arcade Attack	4.5	Ubisoft	248	E10+
Tetris Party Deluxe	8.5	Majesco	256	E
Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen	7.0	Activision	245	E10+
WarioWare D.I.Y.	8.5	Nintendo	253	E
WireWay	6.5	Konami	249	E
A Witch's Tale	4.0	NIS America	247	E10+
The Wizard of Oz: Beyond the Yellow Brick Road	6.5	XSEED	246	E
WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2010	7.0	THQ	248	T

MORE ON:

MEGA MAN ZERO COLLECTION

Call me a wimp, but I'm really glad they put an Easy Scenario mode into Mega Man Zero Collection. The original versions of these games were—and still are—fantastic, but they push you to your limits, and after I beat them on Game Boy Advance I couldn't make myself do it again. Easy mode gives me the perfect excuse to enjoy all the gaming goodness but without the stress. —CHRIS H.

MORE ON:

PUZZLE QUEST 2

From the moment I started playing Puzzle Quest 2, I was hooked once again. The combination of RPG elements and Bejeweled-style gameplay works even better this time around thanks to a heavier emphasis on the RPG side of things. —JUSTIN C.

WALL
BASH
FOCUS
INTIMI
RUSH

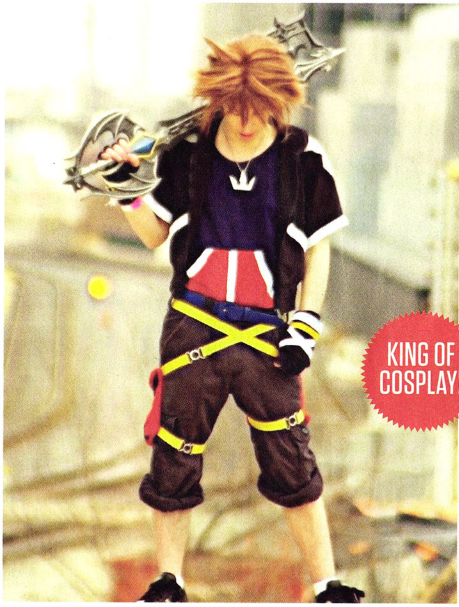
EVENT

Countdown to Zero

There ain't no party like a Mega Man party. Get your weapons ready!

TO CELEBRATE THE June release of Mega Man Zero Collection for the Nintendo DS handheld, Capcom decided to throw a party—and invite all of its closest friends. Dozens of Capcom-unity website members stopped by the publisher's HQ in San Mateo, California for an evening of fun, food, and robot-blasting mayhem. Partygoers got early hands-on time with production copies of Mega Man Zero Collection, and no fewer than 10 Wii systems were set up so fans could enjoy the classic action of Mega Man 1 through 10. When they weren't playing, attendees could kick back and watch the *Mega Man: Upon a Star* anime, or enter a raffle for prizes such as Mega Man action figures and the recently released *Mega Man ZX* manga from UDON. Additionally, competitions were held to see who could survive the longest playing the Endless modes in Mega Man 9 and 10. Michael Dong of Oakland and Shamis Kabil of Hayward walked away the winners, each earning a rare Mega Man 9 press kit and T-shirt. —**CHRIS H.**

Michael Dong [left] and Shamis Kabil [right] emerged victorious in Endless mode competitions for Mega Man 9 and Mega Man 10 respectively.



KING OF COSPLAY!

COSPLAY

Power Stance

Kingdom Hearts cosplay taken to the next level

IT'S INTERESTING HOW many female cosplayers seem to enjoy dressing up as Kingdom Hearts's heroic male protagonist Sora. However, this particularly epic photo capturing an intense moment of Sora cosplay is 100 percent Mann. Tyler Mann, 18, of Toronto, Ontario, to be exact. "I was mesmerized by the characters and the idea of Square characters co-existing with Disney characters," says Mann about first getting hooked on the Kingdom Hearts games, which he was introduced to by friends. He quickly began writing fan fiction, creating fan art, and eventually attending conventions as his favorite characters from the series.

Playing the part and having fun pretending to be the character you're dressed up as is a big part of the thrill of cosplay: "It's sort of like acting, with a full costume," Mann enthuses. "Plus Sora is one of the characters that I love, and nothing makes me happier than to look in a mirror and see myself as Sora."

Putting the costume together was a lot of work that involved modifying existing clothes and hand-sewing some items from scratch. Setting up the slick photo was also an elaborate task that required assistance from friends Mandy Bohn (who took the photo) and Vincent Humchak (who crafted the impressive Keyblade). A zoom lens, a perfect location, and a determined pose yielded a great shot.

"We set up the camera a long way away from where I was standing, which was at the edge of a staircase, and is how we got that perfect backdrop," notes Mann. "I love the photo because of the epic stance and the incredible focus." **—NATHAN M.**

WRITE *your own* CAPTION

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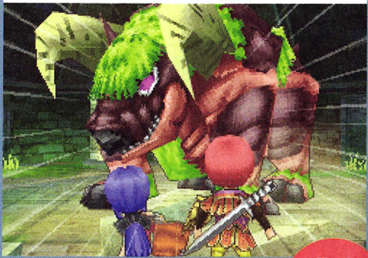
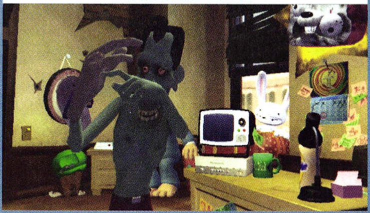
THIS MONTH'S SHOT



No, sir, we would *not* like any Kool-Aid.

Here's our caption. THINK YOU CAN DO BETTER?

VOLUME 256'S SHOT



"I don't get it. That online palm-reader website said my lifeline should be right here." **—REVROCK**

"Smacking those humans really takes a toll on your hand." **—KYLE A.**

"Has anybody seen my gaming hand? This one's not working for me." **—ALEX G**

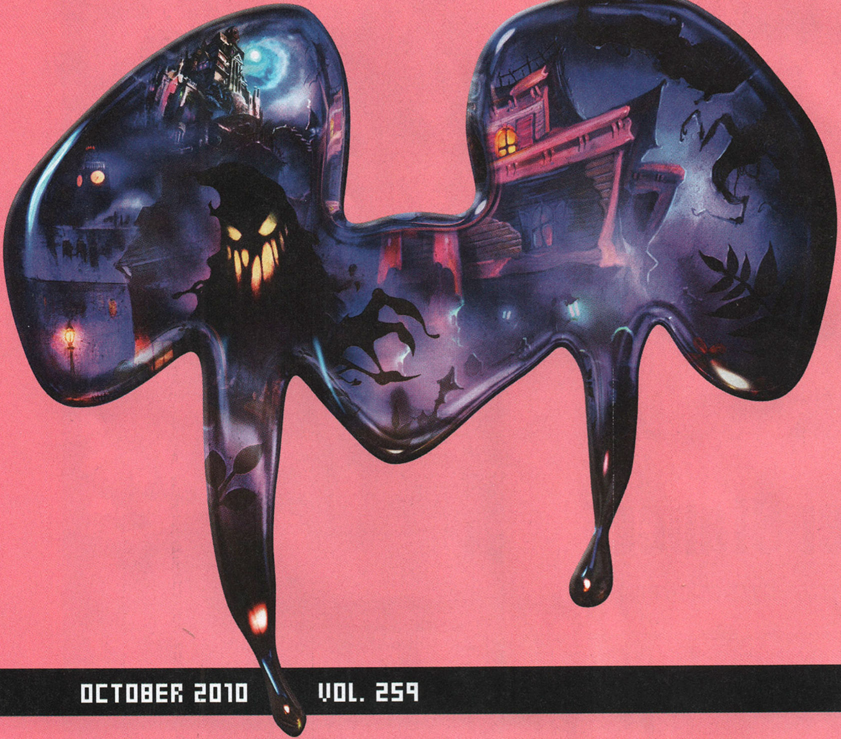
"My palm-sized mirror shows a crazy rabbit next to my window. I don't remember putting that there...." **—FISHERSPOT**

"Hey, did somebody leave their hand on my desk? Going once? Going twice? No? Then I'm just gonna eat it." **—ZACH B.**

"After the zombie realized that his theory of pushing objects to turn or get them on or off didn't work on his glove, he smiled in disbelief and went to work on the method we now call 'pulling.'" **—OMAR JR.**

ABOVE *and* BEYOND

Got art, cosplay, case mods, etc.? Send them to us via email to **community@nintendopower.com** or via snail mail to Nintendo Power/Community c/o Future US, 4000 Shoreline Court, STE 400, South San Francisco, CA 94080. We'll print the best stuff!



OCTOBER 2010 VOL. 259

NEXT MONTH

Characters don't get any more recognizable than Mickey Mouse, and third-party Wii games don't get any bigger than Epic Mickey. Next issue we'll delve into this incredible adventure with exclusive new details on the levels, story, and more, along with revelations straight from the developers. Plus: a plethora of previews and interviews, including a chat with Yuji Horii, the creator of Dragon Quest.

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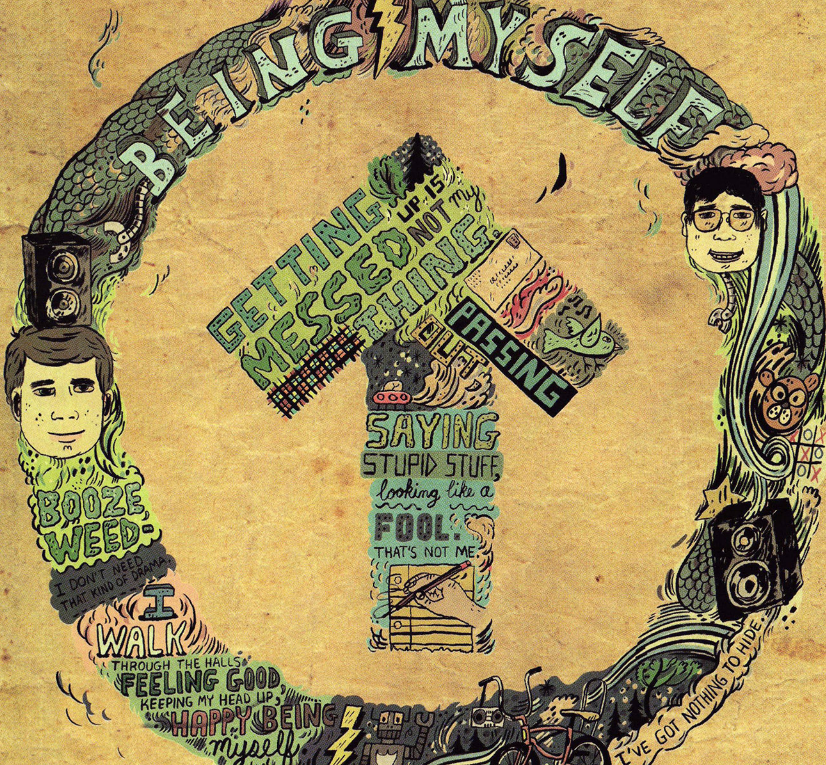
BEING MYSELF
GETTING MESSED UP IS NOT MY THING.
PASSING OUT
SAYING STUPID STUFF, looking like a FOOL. THAT'S NOT ME.
BOOZE WEED-
I DON'T NEED THAT KIND OF DRAMA.
I WALK THROUGH THE HALLS FEELING GOOD, KEEPING MY HEAD UP, HAPPY BEING myself
I'VE GOT NOTHING TO HIDE.

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